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Return Services Requested

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

Endnotes

¹ Huxley, Julian. "Panel Two. The Evolution of Life." *Issues in Evolution*. University of Chicago Press. Chicago Illinois. 1960. P. 107

² Simpson, George Gaylord. *Science*. April 1, 1960. P. 969.

³ Hall, Marshall and Sandra. *The Truth, God or Evolution?* Baker Book House. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 2nd printing, 1977. P. 53.

⁴ Thompson, Bert. *Christian Apologetics and Christian Evidences*. Notes used in School of Evangelism, A.M. church of Christ, College Station, Texas. 1979-80. P. 296.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 296-297.

⁶ Hall. *Op. Cit.* P. 55.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 57.

⁸ Davidheiser, *Op. Cit.* p. 191.

⁹ Jackson, Wayne. "A Fly in the Ointment of Evolution". *Christian Courier*. Stockton, California. October, 1975.

¹⁰ Williams, Jon Gary. *The Other Side of Evolution*. Williams Brother Publishers. Lavergne, Tennessee. 3rd Ed. 1970. P. 37.

¹¹ Jackson, *Op. Cit.*

¹² Ayala, Francisco, J. "Teleological Explanations in Evolutionary Biology." *Philosophy of Science*. Vol. 37 (March, 1970). P. 3.

¹³ Muller, H. J. *Time Magazine*. November 11, 1946. P. 96.

¹⁴ Williams. *Op. Cit.* p. 38.

FOR YOUR ADDRESS BOOK

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Just Cause For Moral Outrage

A very pronounced decay of moral standards is highly evident in the God-ordained institutions of the home, the government, and the church. Our society has reached its lowest state ever.

Editor's Note: This article was run in June 1998. Since the circulation of Banner of Truth has increased greatly since that time, and since this subject is even more timely now than when originally written, we are reprinting it.

The beginning of moral standards occurred when Adam was instructed by God relative to the trees in the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15-17). God's moral standards were also given to Adam's family, as we learn from the account of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4; Heb. 11:4). Moving down the stream of time, there has never been a period when God did not have a standard or rules of conduct, by which men were to live. Disrespect for these godly standards has been greater at some times than at others. We are currently living in one of those times when respect for those standards is declining at a very rapid and frightening rate in our country.

Our nation, most likely the greatest ever in this world, was founded by men, who for the

most part, had considerable respect for Divine rules of conduct. America has been called a "Christian nation" from the standpoint that Christianity, in the denominational sense, has been the prevailing religion. While true Christianity has not been practiced by the nation as a whole, many are they who have been influenced by godly principles, including many who profess no religion at all.

Within the past four or five decades, detrimental changes in our societies' respect for God's standards have occurred. These changes have accelerated at a rapid rate within the past several years. Though not everyone, thank God, has discarded moral values, a great many in various areas of society have done so. We are fast becoming a nation that has forgotten God. That is certainly no trivial matter. We would do well to consider the Wise Man's words, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). →

BANNER OF TRUTH

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Continued from Page 1

Just as sin has resulted in the downfall of many nations it can happen to ours as well. At the present rate or moral decline our nation could fall, even within the time of some of us.

In the following discussion we shall call attention to the deterioration of moral values in the HOME, the GOVERNMENT, and the CHURCH. Each of these God-ordained institutions has an influence upon society in a mutual sense. We begin by considering the first institution, the home.

I. MORAL VALUES IN THE HOME

There is no question but that the home in America is at its weakest point ever. With the breakdown of the home has come a number of attendant evils. Though God has set forth the standard by which the home is to operate, that standard is being tragically ignored by a great many people. This is being evidenced by the fact that homes are disintegrating at an alarming rate. In 1900 there was one divorce for every 37 marriages, now the alarming rate is one divorce for every

two marriages. This is not taking into account the fact that four or five million couples are now living together ("shacking up") without being married. Society would not have tolerated this when I was growing up.

Though God has ordained discipline in the home, it is virtually non-existent in many homes today. This is sadly true with far too many homes within the church. The problem often has its roots in the fact that the parents have not learned discipline themselves. Undisciplined parents are not likely to practice discipline with their children, a terrible injustice.

A high regard for truth is often lacking in more and more homes. It is not uncommon for parents to be dishonest with their children by making statements to them which are not true. This is teaching children, by example, to have disrespect for truth and honesty. Parents have been known to actually ask their children to lie for them. A good example of this is when parents ask their children to say they are not at home when someone asks for them on the phone. Many children are not being taught to be people of their word, as the majority of people once were.

We are currently seeing some of the tragic results which testify to the home's failure. The continuing increase of crime among teenagers is a mounting problem. More and more young people are becoming slaves to alcohol and other drugs. Sexual promiscuity is becoming more prevalent and fewer and fewer people raise an eyebrow. The stigma that used to be attached to such sinful action is virtually unheard of now. A matter of some concern in recent times is the rash of shootings and murders by gun-carrying teenagers, and even some below teenage. When a five-year-old kindergarten student in Memphis takes a gun to school, threatening to shoot people, it is clearly evident that something has gone tragically wrong in the home.

Materialism has dampened interest in spiritual values in many homes. Parents often spend so much of their time in the pursuit of "things" that the fulfillment of parental responsibilities is woefully lacking. Children may be provided with an abundance of material things but denied the sorely needed spiritual instruction and training which God intended for them to have. No wonder that our problems in society are multiplying day by day. Things will get worse unless drastic changes are made. †

all organisms are organically related, then the fossil record should contain the transitional form(s) between two distinctly different "kinds" of life. For example, somewhere in the fossil record there should be seen the remains of that which was neither human nor non-human. Scientist John Moore states:

The very essence of evolutionary thinking is slow change. Therefore a major prediction from the General Theory of Evolution would be that researchers would expect to find a record of gradual transition from the least complex to the complex... In fact, if the General Theory of Evolution ever has any empirical basis, such a gradual transition of fossils must be found.⁶

The conclusion of this matter is, "...no intermediates have ever been observed... either in the present world or the fossil world."⁷ Thus, it is the case that the two absolutely necessary sources of proof for evolution are simply not available. What a pink elephant in the room! But, there is a herd of them yet.

The Mechanism Problem. How can you say a process takes place, or has taken place, if you have no idea, and cannot prove or explain what the driving force behind it is?

Evolutionists appeal to natural selection and mutation in this regard. Arthur W. Haupt, Professor of Botany at UCLA states, "New forms arise spontaneously by mutation; natural selection then determines whether or not they will survive. If better suited to the environment than existing forms, they tend to be preserved; if not, they are eliminated. Thus the course of evolution is *directed* (emp. added, AA) by the environment but mainly under the influence of natural selection."⁸

First, let us consider "mutations", and their significance as per evolution. "Mutation" is defined as follows,

Living organisms are composed of cells containing genes. Genes the heredity material by which the organism is duplicated. Whenever a change occurs in the genetic material, whether from extraneous sources or from the genes damaging themselves, a mutation is said to happen. Evolutionists believe that mutations can be collected and sorted by the process of natural selection and thus produce an entirely new "kind" of living being."⁹

Nobody denies the fact of mutations, but it remains a fact that mutations only alter already existing entities or beings. After the alteration is complete, all you have is the same entity or being with some changes. Mutations do not produce new "kinds". "The evolutionist needs more than mutations, he needs *transmutations*. In other words he needs a mutation that *crosses over the barriers between the different kinds of animals*. This, of course is impossible, even in laboratory experiments. Simple mutations cannot explain the *large changes* necessary for evolution."¹⁰ Essentially, what is needed is a Fairy Princess to "kiss" a toad, so that the toad be not merely a different kind of toad, rather something uniquely different from a toad. Things do not happen in this world without a sufficient cause.

Mutations have occurred that were not lethal to the organism; think about cancer. How does one, however, reason from this that literally millions of *advantageous* (to the organism) mutations have, or could have occurred? Geneticist, William J. Tinkle states, "No mutation is on record which would make an animal or plant better organized or place it in a higher category than its ancestors."¹¹ Such "transmutation" simply does not and cannot occur.

Secondly, mutations, period, are extremely rare in occurrence. F. J. Ayala states: "It is probably fair to estimate the frequency of a majority of mutations in higher organisms between one in ten thousand and one in a million per gene per generation."¹² To strengthen the point, Hermann Muller notes that *good* mutations (i.e. not good in the sense of being advantageous; these do not occur) "...are so rare that we may consider them all as bad."¹³ Not only are mutations so rare, so as to be considered insignificant, but the chances of such producing a superior, uniquely different "kind" of organism are nil.

Thirdly, as already noted most mutations are harmful to the organism to begin with; but, in those rare cases where a desirable trait (i.e. desirable to human beings, not necessarily the mutant) emerges, if left alone will quickly recede and disappear. Evolution is ever an "uphill climb toward complexity," but one of its chief mechanisms, mutations, never does any *climbing*. "The one systematic effect of mutations seems to be a tendency toward degeneration."¹⁴ →

Evolution (2)

INTRINSIC PROBLEMS OF THE “GENERAL THEORY OF EVOLUTION.” Evolution by its nature, claims and terms is beset by insuperable problems. It reminds me somewhat of Tennessee Ernie Ford telling about the person who put his milk bucket under a bull; you just have to know he has a problem from the get go. Let us consider several such intrinsic problems—

The Proof Problem Evolution affirms the “emergence and variation of all forms of living organisms by way of sheerly natural and random processes.” It is an amazing thing to read and study all of the elaborate and complicated treatises which deal with how evolution occurred. Such are usually very intricate, containing attractive charts and provocative drawings. However, the careful reader must and always will ask, “Yes, but where’s the proof?”

The most obvious answer to the question should be, “Look around you.” Since evolutionists extrapolate from present, observable, natural laws and facts, and affirm that such laws have always existed and account for the origin and existence of all forms of life, then, it should be the case that any casual observer could see these same processes bringing about exactly the same results.

Julian Huxley admitted to this fact when he said, “Evolution is definable in general terms as a one-way, irreversible process in time...”¹ George Gaylord Simpson further substantiated this point when he said, “Evolution is a fully natural process, inherent in the physical properties of the universe...”² Surely, since evolution is “one-way” and “irreversible,” and since it is “inherent” within the universe, then one should constantly be cognizant of living things arising from non-living things, and humans arising from non-humans. However, such is obviously not the case. The only natural law “inherent in the physical universe” that anyone can observe along this line, is that law that decrees that life comes only from prior life and that of its own kind. The argument would be as follows: (1) evolution implies that the same process that brought life into existence, and accounts for all of the variations of life, should be observable today; (2) it is false that such a process can be observed today; (3) therefore, evolution is false.

Inasmuch as one cannot prove evolution to be true on the basis of observation of the present, then the only other alternative is that of the past, or history. Marshall and Sandra Hall delineate this fact as follows:

It should be emphasized that the fossil record is the prime source of so-called evidence for the general theory of evolution. It is of primary importance because it is interpreted as the record of what has existed, of what has happened. Many authorities agree that the decisive ‘evidence’ for the general theory of evolution must be based upon what they consider to be historical. In other words, historical evidence for evolution must be found in the fossil record.³

Two things must be obvious if the fossil record is to be considered as credible testimony: (1) a record of the “gradual” emergence of life from inorganic matter; and (2) a record of the “gradual transition” of one “kind” of organism into another.

As regards the first point, not only does the fossil record not contain such a record of emergence, but in fact, contrary to evolution, the record shows the “sudden emergence” of life with no record of nay kink between the living and the non-living. In this regard, Dr. Bert Thompson states:

Life began, according to the evolutionists, in the Archeozoic Era...When we examine the Archeozoic layers and the Proterozoic layers of strata (the Proterozoic layer immediately follows the Archeozoic) we find no undisputed evidence of life. But when one examines the next layer—the Cambrian strata—what is to be found?

BANG! The Cambrian layer is filled with thousands of fossils—and all of those creatures are diversified and complex. Life immediately and suddenly appears.⁴

Thompson, citing W.A. Criswell, further notes, “So all kinds of life, when you see them in geological strata, appear suddenly and then they all appear complete...When you see it in the geological record, there it is just the same as you see it today.”⁵

As regards the second point, it is just as faulty. Inasmuch as evolutionists affirm that

God’s plan for strong homes, guided by His moral standards, would, if followed, result in the kind of society with God would be well pleased. But upon the homes in our present society can rightly be placed the blame for the greater portion of our current problems.

II. MORALITY IN GOVERNMENT

That God has ordained civil government is made clear by Romans 13. We can understand why God did this. Society cannot function properly without a standard or rules of conduct. Without such chaos is the result. Though God has ordained civil government this does not mean that every action by government has God’s approval. Governments can be “a terror” to “good works” rather than “to the evil” as God intended (Rom. 13:3).

When a conflict between civil government and God’s word occurs, man is duty bound to submit to God’s word. When the apostles were commanded not to teach in the name of Christ, “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than man” (Acts 5:29). This principle is still true.

Whereas our government has generally upheld that which is good and opposed the evil, it has changed drastically in more recent times. That change had it is beginning more than thirty years ago. Godly principles which played such an important part in the formation of our government began to be abandoned. The result has been in several instances a reversal of God’s intended purpose for government. More and more we have seen our government upholding and encouraging that which is evil, in that it is a violation of God’s will for man.

In the following we shall note some of the changes which have transpired, which account for the sordid condition which now exists is so much of civil government and affects society. Needless to say that this change in government, along with change in other areas, has had a devastating effect upon our society in general.

Generally speaking, those who are liberal politically are proponents for things which are opposed to God’s moral standards. More than thirty years ago many of our courts started on a path wherein they became political tools to further their liberal political agenda. The

Women’s Lib Movement should not pass without mention, but we move on to the legalized murder of innocent children by abortion. The disregard for the sanctity of human life probably represents one of the most pronounced changes in our nation’s moral standards. The most horrible form of murder by abortion is known as “Partial birth abortion.” In this type of murder, the innocent human being has its brains sucked out while it is still partially within the mother’s body. While our congress has passed bills to outlaw this fiendish act, the number one man in our country, the President, has vetoed this legislation.

Whereas our government was once devoted to the saving and protection of life in our country, it is now guilty of encouraging the snuffing out of life, not only by abortion but another method as well. The state of Oregon passed a law that makes it legal to assist people in committing suicide. The law is called the Death With Dignity Act. The *Tennessean*, June 6, 1998, quoted Janet Reno as saying the Federal Government will not stand in the way of doctors who help terminally ill patients kill themselves. The terminally ill are said to be those who may die within six months.

Those who thought the legalizing of abortion was not opening up the gate to further destruction of human life were wrong as could be. The encouragement of helping people kill themselves is another step in doing away with the unwanted and unuseful in society. When it gets to the point that one can be imprisoned for killing an eagle and yet kill God’s human creatures to the tune of a million and a half each year with impunity, such a government has reached the depths of degradation. God has been forgotten.

The death penalty has been made illegal in many states, and a woeful lack of punishment of criminals is the case in a growing number of instances. In some cases the criminal is favored more than the victim. Criminal acts are often dealt with by no more than a slap on the wrist. When sentences are meted out, they are so often “suspended,” as if crime was no more than a laughing matter. Yet, God’s standard is, “...But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he [the ruler] beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil” (Rom. 13:4). God’s law is being ignored. →

Several years ago school prayer was made illegal by government. Though government is becoming more and more opposed to virtually every vestige of Godly influence, there is virtually no restriction on the encouragement of immorality in many areas.

The welfare state which has come to be is in violation of God's standard, "...if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thess. 3:10). Those who work, as God intended (Eph. 4:28), are penalized by having to support the lazy, unwilling to work, people in our society. As a country we have drifted so far in the direction of the Godless government which prevailed for more than seventy years in the former Soviet Union. For a year and a half I saw firsthand the effects of that kind of government in Ukraine.

In the area of sexual morality our government has sunk to its lowest state ever. Beginning with our President Clinton, sexual perversion is being encouraged in our society. Our President has surrounded himself with dozens of avowed sexual perverts, homosexuals. This step of degradation doesn't stop there. Our Vice President, Al Gore, and the Attorney General, Janet Reno, are also encouraging the homosexual and lesbian agenda. It appears that we are actually becoming much like Sodom and Gomorrah. As evidence of this observation we ask that the following be read from the AFA Journal, Jan. 1998, pp. 1, 5, be read:

President Clinton backs all-out push for homosexual rights

...Clinton promised his continued support for gay "civil rights" legislation when he addressed 1,500 homosexuals attending the Human Rights Campaign's (HCR) annual dinner in November. The 200,000 member HCR, a gay lobby group, also gave a civil rights award to actress Ellen DeGeneres, who was in attendance.

Vice President Al Gore is also enthusiastic about the gay rights movement. In October the vice president praised Disney/ABC's *Ellen* for forcing Americans to "look at sexual orientation in a more open light." And in September Gore promised his help to a cheering audience at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force annual gala.

By virtue of his speech, Clinton became the first U.S. President ever to address a gay rights group in person...

'REDEFINING' BIBLICAL MORALITY

At the HRC banquet, the President promised to play his part in a bold undertaking, saying, "We have to broaden the imagination of America" to accept homosexuals as equals. "We are redefining in practical terms the immutable ideals that have guided us from the beginning."

But gays in attendance loved the 23 minute speech, interrupting it with applause 25 times – and seven of those times the applause turned to a standing ovation. One of those standing ovations was initiated by DeGeneres and her lesbian partner, actress Anne Heche. DeGeneres was there to receive HRC's National Civil Rights Award.

HATE CRIMES NEXT ON CLINTON'S LIST

Just days later, the President also participated in a White House conference on "hate crimes," where he endorsed the concept of "diversity education." Clinton and other speakers called for K-12 instruction aimed at teaching children tolerance of, among other things, the homosexual lifestyle.

Attorney General Janet Reno, who hosted the conference, said, "We need to speak out against prejudice, intolerance, and bigotry whenever we see it and wherever we find it."...

...Even the President said schools were a necessary vehicle because parents were failing to teach their children to accept homosexuality.

In fact, Reno suggested to the 425 participants that they return to their schools and make certain that diversity training programs are in place. Such programs, she said, should include a "conflict resolution plan," so that problem children could be enrolled. "Find out what your schools are doing in diversity programs to teach others how to appreciate diversity," Reno said.

If the above is not sufficient proof that three of our top people in this country have an agenda which pressures society to conform to the ungodly practice of homosexuality, no amount of proof would be sufficient to do so.

That our President and others of influence in our government have already succeeded in leading many further down the road to immorality is being confirmed by the attitude of many in society. Rather than being a role model in morality our President is everything but that. In the April 20, 1998, issue of Time, p. 64, there is an interesting note concerning the thinking

Sixth Annual Banner of Truth Lectures

Murray, KY, June 5-8, 2006

Warring A Good Warfare

Location: Curris Center, M.S.U. Campus, Third Floor Theater

MONDAY, JUNE 5

- 10:00 a.m. Alan Adams – *Warring A Good Warfare*
- 11:00 a.m. David Lemmons – *Winning The Enemy In Foreign Lands*
- 1:30 p.m. Michael Willy – *The Army's Rules Of Conduct*
- 2:30 p.m. Gilbert Gough – *Food For The Effective Soldier Of Christ*
- 3:30 p.m. Paul Curless – *Fraternizing With The Enemy*
- 7:00 p.m. Freddie Clayton – *Poor Schools Of Training Makes Ineffective Soldiers*
- 8:00 p.m. Ken Burleson – *Effective Training For Soldiers Of Christ*

TUESDAY, JUNE 6

- 10:00 a.m. Garland Robinson – *The Captain Of Our Salvation*
- 11:00 a.m. Freddie Clayton – *The Shield Of Faith*
- 1:30 p.m. Jeff Bates – *Unrest And Turmoil In The Ranks*
- 2:30 p.m. Ken Burleson – *Fearless Soldiers Conquer The Enemy*
- 3:30 p.m. Richard Guill – *Entanglements To Avoid*
- 7:00 p.m. Garland Robinson – *Soldiers And Effective Communication*
- 8:00 p.m. Leon Cole – *Replacing The Sword Of The Spirit*

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7

- 10:00 a.m. David Lemmons – *Recruiting Soldiers For Foreign Duty*
- 11:00 a.m. Richard Adams – *Pressing Toward The Mark*
- 1:30 p.m. Leon Cole – *Soldiers Who Will Not Fight*
- 2:30 p.m. Rick Knoll – *The Bond That Binds True Soldiers Of Christ*
- 3:30 p.m. Walter W. Pigg – *Defying The Army Of The Living God*
- 7:00 p.m. Virgil Hale – *Terms Of Entrance Into The Lord's Army*
- 8:00 p.m. Alan Adams – *Duty, Honor And Country*

THURSDAY, JUNE 7

- 10:00 a.m. Lindon Ferguson – *Standing Against The Wiles Of The Devil*
- 10:00 a.m. Lloyd Gale – *Qualified Officers In The Lord's Army*
- 1:30 p.m. Robert Alexander – *Sin In The Camp Spells Defeat*
- 2:30 p.m. Jimmy Bates – *Unity If Loyalty And Purpose*
- 3:30 p.m. Guyton Montgomery – *Old Faithful Soldiers*
- 7:00 p.m. Richard Guill – *The Lake Of Fire*
- 8:00 p.m. Steve Yeatts – *The Crown Of Life*

We are happy to announce that the motel is again giving us the \$37 rate. We will be making reservations for those who need a room, and it would greatly help if you would inform us of your needs soon. For more information, please contact brother Richard Guill: Res: (270) 489-6219, Office: 489-2219; or me at (270) 753-3679. If any changes need to be made we will make this known in the next issue of B.O.T.

My Response: Christ's church existed long before there was an "American." Shelly knows this as well as anyone and that is what he used to forcefully teach and preach with the appearance of the greatest sincerity and conviction. The churches of Judea heard that Paul, "now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed" (Gal. 1:23). The converse, though sad, is now true with Rubel Shelly. He is now destroying the faith which he once preached.

Shelly: No, Churches of Christ began in an historical movement whose slogan was, "Christians only, not the only Christians."... "We don't believe we're the only Christians or the only ones going to heaven."

My Response: Rubel Shelly, for years would not have taught such. The very idea that there are Christians in the denominations, the man-made churches, is a flat denial of the distinctiveness of the Lord's church as clearly set forth in God's word. Paul says there is "one body" (Eph. 4:4) and the body is the "church" (Col. 1:18).

Christ said he would "build my church" (Matt. 16:18), not churches. We never find churches in the plural with reference to other churches which Christ built or purchased with His blood. He didn't.

If people are going to heaven, who are not a part of the church for which Christ died, then why did He die? It would have been in vain, if the erroneous conclusion of Rubel Shelly is accepted.

NEWTTESTAMENT WARNINGS

There are many warnings of false teachers in the New Testament, and that some would "depart from the faith." John, about the last of the first century, said, "many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). False teaches are nothing new, but they have never had God's approval, and never will, regardless of how many there are.

These false teachers would come from not only the world of false religions, as in the case of Pastor Rukala and Bob Jones, they would come from within the body of Christ. The great apostle Paul, sounds a most serious warning as he addresses the Ephesian elders at Miletus. After telling the elders to take heed to themselves and to their flock, to feed the church of God, he says: "For I know that after my departing shall griev-

ous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30).

Of whom was Paul speaking in the above? It included such men as Rubel Shelly and numerous others who would turn away from the faith and teach erroneous doctrines. Paul wrote the Philippians, saying: "(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).

We are living in a time when the true religion of Jesus Christ finds lodging in few hearts. Why is this? The teaching of Christ requires a commitment to His word. It demands of his followers an upright way of life, which brings great blessings to any society which is willing to obey Him.

It is no wonder that people falsely accuse our Lord's church. People love darkness rather than light. They choose to live by what men want, not by what God wants.

What Can We Do? We can stand fast in and contend for the faith. (I Cor. 16:13; Jude 3). If people lived faithful lives in the New Testament times, so can we in our times. We need, however, to speak out and stand up for the truth. We are not to fear what men can do to us.

The tragedy of the Mary Winkler case, has called a lot of public attention to the church. Though much of what has been said about it is not according to the truth and fact, this is a time when we should write letters to editors, place ads in news papers. It is a time when preachers and teachers should speak up in behalf of the church and the good things about it. In many cases we have fallen short in emphasizing the distinctiveness of the one and only New Testament church, and the things which are right about it.

Let us work and pray that good may come out of the opportunity before us to set forth the truth in an uncompromising manner. Thank God, there are those who love the truth and will stand. There is no power than can defeat us, other than ourselves.

Let us pray for those affected by that tragic incident in the Winkler family in Selmer, TN.

—Editor

of people with reference to morality. The article under consideration involves Larry Flynt. Flynt, who was arrested on obscenity charges in Ohio in 1977, has returned to Ohio, opened up a store selling soft-core porn and sex toys. He has again been arrested for violating Ohio laws. The A.C.L.U. is supporting Flynt in the case. The president of A.C.L.U., Nadine Strossen, thinks Flynt might win, saying, "Look at what's going on in the White House and how tolerant people are." She said further, "It indicates that the populace has become much more tolerant of sex between consenting adults and less willing to spend public resources in investigating the activity."

Due to the reaction of so many people with regard to the alleged scandalous activity which has taken place in the White House, it appears that the president of A.C.L.U. may have a point, as sad as it is. It is a sad commentary on the morals of our country that there is so much indifference concerning matters of morality. The polls say that a majority of people don't trust our President and believe he is guilty of wrongdoing. That we have a president of such a bad reputation is cause for great concern. But of even greater concern is the fact that so many people simply don't care.

The present state of moral decay in our society, though the worst we've ever seen, is not something new in the world. It is not right nor will it ever be right. But in the Old Testament we have the record of people, even those professing to be God's people, who became morally corrupt time after time. God's wrath was brought to bear upon those people time after time. It seems that many of them never learned to respect God and His will for His people. They paid a great price for their disobedience.

The apostle Paul said those things which were "written aforetime were written for our learning..." (Rom. 15:4). Those things written aforetime included the record of those who were disobedient to God and morally reprobate. It looks like this should be a warning for us. It is, of course, but many will not heed it.

III. MORALITY WITHIN THE CHURCH

The people, above all, who should respect and give complete credence to God's moral standards are those who are members of His church. Though this is the

way it ought to be, in far too many instances this is not the case. An increasing number of brethren are no longer being honest with God's word, yet this is the very means, and the only means, by which we can walk uprightly before God and his fellow man (2 Tim. 3:16-17). God's word is the unchangeable standard by which men will ultimately be judged (Jno 12:48).

Using *morality* in a broad sense, referring to that which is right and wrong by God's divine standard, we shall note some areas in which morality is being disregarded.

Upholding Denominationalism. The distinctiveness of the blood-bought New Testament church is now being denied on a widespread basis by people within the church. Instead of the distinctiveness of the church being emphasized, as does the New Testament, there is a strong, active move toward denominationalism. Perhaps the two names mentioned most often as being in the forefront of this move toward denominationalism are Max Lucado and Rubel Shelly. While these men may be better known within our brotherhood, there are quite a number of others who are thinking in the same direction, and who are known by quite a number of people. In this group we would include such men as: Rick Atchley, Buddy Bell, J. Wayne Kilpatrick, Randy Mayeux, F. LaGard Smith, and Jeff Walling. A number of others could be added.

Just this very day I received a review of a sermon preached to the Methodist Church in Jumpertown, Mississippi, by Haskel Sparks. The sermon emphasized the things which the Lord's church and the Methodist Church have in common. There was no attempt to set forth the truth of God's word relative to the distinctiveness of the one and only church purchased by the blood of Christ. The sermon was well received and applauded by the Methodist. Instead of being taught the Truth, they were encouraged in their error by brother Sparks' teaching and his fellowship with them. Sad.

If this move toward denominationalism was being heard only by those who listen to the above men it would be a tragedy, but comparatively speaking it would not include the major portion of our brotherhood. But the fact is, the same error being promoted by these men is also being promoted by a great many brethren who are not so well known. I'm →

hearing of even small congregations displaying an affinity for the man-made religions. And, the above brethren of error are being used for meetings, lecture-ships, etc. Their influence is also being propagated by their writings in an effective way.

It is difficult to think of anything which is more detrimental to the cause of Christ than to equate the man-made religions with the Lord's church, as an increasing number of our brethren are doing. This change is in the air and the winds are blowing with gale force. Sadly, so many are not so much as being ruffled by the breeze. People ask, "How can brethren who know the truth go away from it?" A number of factors are likely involved, but we are warned of the devil's "devices," (2 Cor 2:11) and his "wiles," (Eph. 6:11). The New Testament is replete with warnings that brethren will "depart from the faith" (1 Tim. 4:1). When brethren depart from the "old paths" and uphold denominational religion, there are two things they might do for the well-being of the Lord's church. One, they could repent of their sin and return to a state of faithfulness. But sadly, when brethren depart in this way they very seldom repent, but go farther and farther from the Truth. Two, they could completely separate themselves from the church and join some denomination, if that is what they want. This would lessen the damage they are doing to the church. In addition to this drift into denominationalism another serious error is gaining momentum amongst us. That is:

Belief in the Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit. Even brethren as prominent as Steve Flatt, President of David Lipscomb University, are espousing this error. Joe Beam, who spoke at the University congregation in Murray last fall, is an example of those who have gone so far into Pentecostalism. He doesn't beat around the bush in claiming the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. The two brethren above are not by themselves by any means, in their belief in the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. A number of the participants in the Nashville Jubilee could be included, as well as many scattered throughout the brotherhood. Who would have thought forty years ago that today faithful brethren would be confronted by a false doctrine set forth by our own brethren, which was at one time opposed in public debate as well as by teaching and preaching, by nearly all members of the church?

But the battle has begun and is now looming on the horizon in a forceful way.

The Profaning of Worship. Over the years we have emphasized John 4:24, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." It has generally been the case that we engaged in worship in a serious manner as acts of reverence paid to God by man. The worshippers, other than those leading the activities, were encouraged to maintain a state of quietness, except when engaged in the song service.

In more recent times drastic changes in worship have come about in many congregations. Innovations include: Handclapping during singing, applause for speakers, or other activities. Singing during the Lord's supper. Solo, trio or group singing. Testifying or giving personal testimony. Lifting up the arms. Drama presentations. Observance of religious holidays. Children's worship. Female leadership. Some have even had baby dedications. This list is not exhaustive, but it should suffice to show the extent of change which has occurred in worship.

We have been critical, and rightly so, of the worship services of some denominations, especially those of the Pentecostal and Holiness groups. One aspect of the criticism related to the emphasis upon emotions, wherein worshippers seek and emotional high. Of course, we have been critical of the use of mechanical instruments of music, and other things which are not authorized by God's word. Now, emotional highs are being sought by some of our brethren.

Worship should be directed toward God, as the New Testament teaches. But it is very obvious that much of the worship of today which is characterized by various innovations, is more concerned with pleasing the worshipper than pleasing God. We can say this because it is clearly evident that there is a lack of scriptural authorization. In fact, much of today's religion is based on what pleases man, not God.

We are living in what some have called, "A pleasure mad generation." People like to be entertained. Unfortunately, that which appeals to society in general often finds its way into the church in some form and to some degree. In some of our worship services by some of our brethren today, certain ones are said to "perform." The audience or worshippers

on the heart of the individual before he is able to believe. In other words, in the universal invitation of Christ (Matt. 11:28-30), "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden..." the Holy Spirit would have to act on the individual before he could accept Christ's invitation. The Book of Acts records several conversions, and in every single one of them, baptism was the consummating act by which their sins were forgiven and how they got into Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27). They heard the word and obeyed.

Pastor Rukala: It is kind of a borderline cult.

My Response: *Webster's* second definition of a cult is: "a group that devotes itself to or venerates a person, ideal, fad, etc." The true Christian devotes himself to Christ, as part of a group who are called Christians (Acts 11:26). Christians reverence and respect Christ as Savior, and as the mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). There is salvation in no other (Acts 4:12). Christ tasted death for us and he purchased the church, through which we can be saved, by his blood (Acts 20:28). In view of all this, if Pastor Rukala wants to call true Christians a "cult," just let him do so. There is one thing for sure, and that is, Christ didn't die for the Baptist church, and neither is he the savior of it. He will save only his body, the church, though some may wish to call his body a "cult."

Pastor Rukala: They are some times not only un-biblical but unethical, very ungracious.

My Response: The accusation of "un-biblical" comes from a mouth which will not point out one whit of truth from God's word, to uphold a false accusation. To charge the church of being "unethical" is accusing it of being immoral. The New Testament does not sanction or uphold immorality on the part of the members of Christ's church, and if the members become immoral they will have to answer for their evil. But as mentioned earlier, some Baptist contend that once a person is saved they can commit all manner of sin and still be saved. That idea flies in the face of God's will for man.

BOB JONES SPEAKS

Bob Jones, chancellor of Bob Jones University adds his bit of criticism of Christ's church on the Nancy Grace program on CNN, though not as extensive as Rukala.

Bob Jones: Jones describes the church as "a legitimate national denomination." He also says "their belief about salvation" is one of the things he would have vast differences with them [the church]. He says it is very

clear from the scripture "that we are redeemed to Christ through the blood of the cross, not by the baptismal waters." He goes on to say that the church is "just a denomination who has doctrines that I personally don't subscribe to because they aren't biblical."

My Response: What one has a right to believe about salvation and other matters of importance is set forth in God's all-sufficient word (2 Tim. 3:16-17). If Bob Jones or anyone else believes something different from God's word teaches, they are just wrong. Bob Jones should know this. Bob Jones should also know it is wrong to misrepresent the church as he has done in the above.

No one that I know of, who is a member of the church, believes that one is saved by "the baptismal waters." If one does believe that, they are just as wrong as Bob Jones.

The church of our Lord does not have "doctrines." The "doctrine of Christ" is set forth in God's word, and members of the church have a responsibility to abide in that doctrine. Man-made churches have "their doctrines" which have arisen from outside God's word. They are doctrines of men, vain.

Members of the church may transgress the "doctrine of Christ" but that doesn't mean the true church and the New Testament supports such. There are many warnings in the New Testament about people departing from the truth, but that doesn't mean the church which Christ purchased with his blood has doctrines "which aren't biblical."

DR. RUBEL SHELLY SPEAKS

Also on the Nancy Grace show, Rubel Shelly has his say. He speaks some truth, but also reveals some of his error. It was not really fair for Nancy Grace to go to a Baptist Pastor, Bob Jones, and one who is known as an apostate from the church by faithful members, to set forth the facts about the church of Christ. Why didn't she call upon some faithful and knowledgeable member of the church for information? She could have gotten a true picture.

We shall consider some of the things said by Rubel Shelly, who is now a professor at Rochester College, a school which has left the Old Paths of the teaching of God's word. We shall note some things by Shelly which are not in harmony with New Testament teaching.

Shelly: Historically, we came out of what's called the American Restoration Movement. →

My Response: The New Testament teaches that not all members of Christ's church are going to heaven. See Matthew 13:41-42. In my almost 53 years of preaching I have taught what the New Testament teaches, that is, one must be a faithful Christian to go to heaven. Christ is the head of the church: and the savior of the body (Eph. 5:23). The "body" is the church (Col. 1:18). There is no promise that I know of that Christ will save those who are not in the body, the church, for which He gave his blood (Acts 20:28). God's word does not teach that Christ is the savior of a Baptist Church, or any other man-made religious group.

Christ said that those who reject him and receive not his word will be judged, by his word (John 12:48). Some Baptist teach that once a person is saved, and that is without baptism which Christ demands, can commit every sin imaginable and still go to heaven. If Mr. Rukala believes such, where in the world did he get such an erroneous idea? One thing for sure, he didn't get it from God's word.

Pastor Rukala: They claim one not baptized by one of their ministers is doomed to hell, even if they are believers in Christ.

My Response: There may be someone who believes that, but in my almost 53 year of preaching I haven't found one. Nowhere does the New Testament teach that one has to be baptized by one of "their" ministers. The Pastor is not speaking factually in this matter, as in some others.

But that baptism is required in order to be saved cannot be denied without an outright denial of God's word. Christ said that he that believes the gospel and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:15-16). The essentiality of baptism is taught many places in the New Testament: Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4). If Mr. Rukala believes what most Baptist believe, he doesn't believe what our Lord and inspired writers said about baptism. Most Baptist believe that it is necessary to be baptized to get into the Baptist Church, an organization unknown to God's word, but that it is not necessary in order to be saved, or go to heaven.

Belief in Christ is used in more than one way. Christ said that among the chief rulers "many believed on him," but they didn't confess him (John 12:42). When we go to Acts 2:44, we learn that "all that believed" has reference to those who obeyed the gospel on the day of Pente-

cost, and were added to the church (v.47). This is a proper example of believing in Christ, but are there Baptist who believe this? The Philippian jailor asked what to do to be saved. He was told to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ..." (Acts 16:30-34). After he was baptized he rejoiced, "believing in God." Belief in God took place after "they spake unto him the word of the Lord." Belief here represents the steps in the conversion which took place.

The writer of Hebrews tells us that Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him (Heb. 5:9). Obedience to Christ surely includes baptism as well as a faith which works (James 2:24), repentance, confession and baptism.

Pastor Rukala: The traditional view is that those who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, because they will be saved by grace through faith in Christ.

My Response: We are not going to be judged by "traditional views," but rather by God's word (John 12:48). To "call upon the name of the Lord" involves more than what Baptist teach, of those that I have heard and read from. Christ said that not everyone that said to him Lord, Lord would enter the kingdom of heaven, but those who do the will of the Father (Matt. 7:21). On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) Jews were pricked in their hearts and asked, "Men and brethren and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter's inspired answer was, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (v. 38). This is clearly an example of doing "the will of the Father." This is the Bible view and not a "traditional view," such as held by the Pastor. He would not give the same answer to the question of what to do to be saved that Peter gave. Why? He doesn't believe baptism is necessary, if he believes what Baptist believe in general.

It is true that people as saved by "grace through faith." But that does not teach what some try to make it teach. Pastor Rukala is good example. God's grace made the gospel available to man, by which man can be saved (Rom. 1:16). The grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us..." (Titus 2:11-12). To be saved by God's grace demands something on the part of those who would be saved. It demands that men have a faith which is alive, which works (James 2:24). It is the "faith which worketh by love" that avails (Gal. 5:6).

If Pastor Rukala believes as most Baptist do, he believes the Holy Spirit has to come down and work ↴

are like spectators, there to be pleased by whatever may be entertaining to them. Under such circumstances minds are not going to be drawn to God, but rather to the entertaining activities.

These "new things" in worship didn't originate in the mind of God, but rather in the minds of men. It is "vain" worship (Matt. 15:9). Our brethren, as is so often the case, are following the practices of denominational religion. What a shame to follow error rather than the Truth.

Unscriptural Fellowship. We are using "fellowship" in the sense of "joint participation, partnership, association." The New Testament sets forth very clearly the conditions under which fellowship is acceptable. As is the case with many other important matters, these conditions of fellowship are being ignored by an increasing number of brethren. There are two areas of fellowship to which we give attention.

First, more and more brethren are engaging in fellowship with denominations. This was a rare thing indeed some thirty years ago. Our liberal brethren some times try to justify their error by perverting Romans 14 and Mark 9:38-40. Some simply make no effort to justify it, as is the case in other matters. To fellowship people in religions which originated with man, which have never had God's approval, is about as far from God's conditions of fellowship as one can get.. The very idea of equating man-made religion with true Christianity, made possible by the sacrifice of our Lord, is an affront to God. The participation in Promise Keepers by several of our brethren is only one current example where this sinful fellowship is taking place.

Second, conditions of fellowship with our brethren are spelled out clearly. "...them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine..." are to be "mark[ed]" and "avoided" (Rom. 16:17). We must not fellowship those who engage in "works of darkness" (Eph. 5:11). We cannot fellowship those who "abideth not in the doctrine of Christ" (2 Jno. 9-11). But in spite of the above clear teaching (and more in the New Testament) some brethren are saying doctrinal differences in specific areas do not matter. Therefore, we can fellowship brethren who uphold the use of instrumental music, the premillennialist, the unscriptural divorced and remarried, and a host of other things. It is not uncommon for congregations to use men who fellow-

ship rank liberals, while at the same time claiming to be sound in the faith.

Disregard for Truth. Christians are to be people of unquestioned honesty. It makes no difference that society thinks lying is a trivial matter, and that even our President is known for his dishonesty, God still requires people to be honest. It is understandable that liberal-minded brethren are lacking in their regard for truth. The liberal is not being honest with God when he assumes the right to ignore or change God's word to suit himself. It a person is dishonest with God, that one need not be expected to be honest with his brethren.

But there is an increase in the lack of trustworthiness among brethren who claim to be sound. This does much hurt to the cause of Christ by way of bad influence.

In the foregoing only a few of the areas where God's moral standards have been ignored, even flouted, have been noted. But these should be sufficient to shock, to arouse a spirit of righteous anger in God-fearing individuals.

IV. JUST CAUSE FOR MORAL OUTRAGE

If the present condition in the three areas of society discussed is not enough to arouse a powerful feeling of righteous anger or indignation, one wonders just what it would take to do so, or if any condition would. This present condition of society relates to each of us since we are a part, to some degree, of the three areas of society. Furthermore, each of us can have some influence in the home, the government and the church. Where there is an opportunity there is also a responsibility.

It is a matter of fact that there is grater indifference relative to moral matters in our society than ever. But even so, if all those who are concerned would raise their voices in support of that which is morally right, and in opposition to that which is morally wrong, a great difference could be made.

Just as this is true in society in general, it is also true in the Lord's church. I'm convinced that in many congregations there is a majority who do care about God's standards, but the tragic thing about it is that this majority is often "the silent majority." When they could have a great influence in keeping things →

on track, they simply give way to the devil by keeping silent. A mere handful of erring brethren can come into a congregation and in time take control because the majority keeps quite.

When we turn to the New Testament we find that we as faithful servants are to be very militant. In Jude 3, the writer says we are to “contend for the faith.” That word “contend” carries the idea that we are to “Contend about a thing, as a combatant” (Vine’s, p. 235). We are to “reprove” works of darkness rather than fellowship them (Eph. 5:11). As soldiers of Christ we are to “put on the whole armor of God” in order to stand against the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:11). We are to “...stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (I Cor. 16:13). We are to “fight the good fight of faith” (I Tim. 6:12). Just as the apostle Paul would not give place by subjection to the false teachers, “no, not for a hour” (Gal. 2:5), neither should we. The book of Revelation depicts a battle between God’s servants and the forces of Satan. The “overcomers” are assured of victory. We can be just as sure of salvation if we remain faithful servants.

CONCLUSION

Christ is our perfect example in many ways. He has set a splendid example of moral outrage and righteous indignation. Though a loving Savior, he was also firm in his convictions and opposition to error. As recorded in John 12:13-17, we see the account of Jesus being moved by what was taking place in the temple. He found in the temple: “those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he made a scourge of small cords, he drove them out of the temple, and the sheep and oxen; and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables; And he said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise.”

Both John the Baptist and Phillip suffered the ultimate because they stood up for God’s truth and would not compromise. They were not afraid to condemn error and neither should we be. The church at Smyrna was warned by Christ that they would be tried and would suffer. But he said to them, “be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). The idea here is not to be faithful all of your life,

but rather, to be faithful to the point of giving up your life in death.

We should ever be thankful to God for those who are unafraid and willing to stand for the Truth at any price. And, there are some of those amongst us, I’m sure. But let us pray, and at the same time work, that many more may be added to the number of those who are deeply concerned, and who feel a sense of outrage and righteous indignation due to the violation of God’s moral standards.

It is most encouraging to me to hear from readers of *Banner of Truth* who are so very concerned about the state of things in our society and in the Lord’s church in particular. Brethren, we need to realize that we can make a difference if we are willing to stand for truth and righteousness and oppose evil in every form. As the apostle John said, “our faith” can be “the victory that overcome the world” (I Jno. 5:4). With God on our side we shall win. And, “Heaven Shall Surely Be Worth It All.”

—Editor

[Editors addition— In the past eight years moral standards have continued to be ignored, at an even faster rather than before. If space allowed we would give many examples to testify to this sad fact. May we awaken to reality.]

Special Announcement

After almost six years, I am no longer working with the church at Dexter, KY. This will give me more needed to time to work with *Banner of Truth*. Also, a smaller work load is something I have needed for some time. Due to my health condition, and my age of 80 years, I have had more than I could actually do.

Our loss of income will work a hardship on us, but we believe the Lord will find a way for us to continue our work with the paper. We may have to ask for financial help to carry on, but we have confidence our brethren will want to have a part in making our work possible.

For the cause of Christ, Walter Pigg —Editor

Christ’s Church Receives Evil Publicity on a Nation-wide Basis in Connection with the Mary Winkler Case in Selmer, Tennessee

Reports are that Matthew Winkler, preacher for the Fourth Street church of Christ in Selmer, Tennessee was murdered by his wife, Mary. This tragic event has been covered far and wide on the national news. In some of that news the Lord’s church has been put down by various statements which are totally unfounded and without credibility, false. As to whether or not these false statements were made in an attempt to discredit the Lord’s church or due to a lack of knowledge, I cannot say. It could be some of both. However, it does appear that some who have spoken adversely should have known better, and could have known by a little research.

The greatest amount of unfavorable publicity that I have seen originated on the Nancy Grace program on CNN. We shall give attention to some of the things said on that program, but cannot cover all the discussion which has transpired.

Why Grace called upon a Baptist Pastor to enlighten her about the church of Christ raises questions in my mind, but that is what happened. She says she has been researching the Church of Christ, but that she doesn’t know much about it. Then she asks a Baptist Pastor what he can tell her.

BAPTIST PASTOR, TOM RUKALA SPEAKS

We shall note some of what the Baptist Pastor says, and then give our response.

Pastor Rukala: Rukala says the church of Christ is relatively new, having been started by Alexander Campbell about 150 years ago.

My Response: The starting of Christ’s church was foretold by Old Testament prophets, such as Isaiah, Daniel and others. Christ himself said he would build his church (Matt. 16:18). In Acts 2 we have the inspired record of its beginning. People were added to it then (v. 47), and from that point onward in the New Testament we find the church in existence. The church had its beginning in the city of Jerusalem. See Isaiah 2:2-3; Acts 2.

Pastor Rukala: The church of Christ is a very legalistic sect.

My Response: If Rukala means by “legalistic” that members of the church are taught by the New Testament that they must abide in “the doctrine of Christ” to have the approval of the Father and the Son (2 John 9), then it would stand that faithful member of the church who abide in the “doctrine of Christ” are “legalistic.” I doubt very much that the Baptist Pastor agrees with 2 John 9:11. He certainly does not abide in the doctrine of Christ by claiming to be a member of the Baptist Church, since there is no record of the establishment of a Baptist Church in God’s word. The history of Baptist Churches goes back no farther than the 1600s. That’s matter of fact.

As far as being a “sect,” the Jews referred to the church as a “sect.” The Jews were at least giving Paul a chance to explain that which they called a “sect,” which they said was “everywhere” spoken against (Acts 28:22). So, Mr. Rukala aligns himself with those who in error spoke of Christ’s church as a “sect.” In this way, he, too, speaks against the Lord’s church. It might be noted that the Baptist Church was not called a sect — It was not then, and has never been, known to the pages of God’s word.

Pastor Rukala: They tend to use methods of pressure and intimidation.

My Response: True members of the Lord’s church endeavor to teach others God’s word, as commanded by Christ (Matt. 28:18-20). That involves pointing out the blessings of following Christ the results of failure to do so. No one that I know of has been forced to become a member of the church of Christ. God requires willing obedience. During the Crusades, in the 11th, 12th, & 13th centuries, the Catholics forced people to convert by threat of death. Islam has grown by the use of the sword. But no Christian in the first century forced anyone to be a Christian. One has no God-given right to do so.

Pastor Rukala: They claim to be the only ones going to heaven and all others are condemned to hell. →