



## BANNER OF TRUTH

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church of Christ

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through the influence upon many congregations. The same pattern of harmful influence by our schools with so adversely affected the church in the past century has now emerged as this century nears its passing. We ask our readers to reflect upon this fact in all seriousness by considering with us:

### OURSCHOOLS' INFLUENCE UPON THE CHURCH

From my personal experience of more than forty years I can attest to the influence of a school upon many congregations, and most especially in the general area where the school is located. This influence has some times been positive, but in recent years it has become increasingly negative. This school, formerly Freed-Hardeman College, is now Freed-Hardeman Univeristy. My reason for using this school as an example is due to the fact that I spent about three years in that school. I have lived in proximity to the school for several years and I have kept fairly well informed as to the activities

of the school. From what I have seen over the years, it appears that others of our schools have influenced the church in their respective areas in basically the same way. May I hasten to say that not everything every school has done constitutes bad influence. By no means is that the case. But let me also say that the unfavorable influence of schools has increased continually over the past several years and continues to do so in our time.

The hurtful influence of these schools has been not happened overnight, but rather gradually over a period of time. To my knowledge none of our schools has come out under a banner proclaiming an evil intent to subvert congregations. Nevertheless, that various congregations have been led away from the truth by a school's influence is clearly evident. It is interesting to note:

#### MEANS BY WHICH SCHOOLS INFLUENCE CONGREGATIONS

Perhaps the greatest means of influence upon congregations is through the students who attend the schools and then become active in congregations in various ways and in various places. Brother Alan Highers stated it so well in a quotation used earlier:

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 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... (*Spiritual Sword*, Vol. 22, July 1991).

Another means of influence by the schools is that their fingers often reach out to various congregations to offer a variety of "services." If a congregation is in need of a preacher, someone to preach in a gospel meeting, or to do fill-in preaching, the school is eager to supply. This also holds true with regard to a number of other "services" which the school is ready to supply. In this way stronger ties with a congregation are formed, thereby increasing the influence of the school upon the congregation. †

you are doing. Please continue to send me your publication or renew it. I've included \$50.00 to help cover the expense of it I'm deeply edified by it. Thank you. – **Randy Gruenwald.**" – CA. (*Thank you; we will see to your request – Editor*).

"Please add my name to your mailing list for Banner of Truth...I preached the truth for more than forty years, until I was near eighty one. Now I'm eighty-nine. God bless your efforts – **C.V. Alexander.**" – FL.

"I pray you and sister Naomi's health will be better in the coming New Year. We both are pushing the edge of our life here on earth. I pray the Lord each day that it might be possible to turn the church around from its downfall. Sorry I don't write much. However, I do try to keep up with you in BOT. – **Mel Chandler.**" – TN.

"The Banner of Truth is so encouraging and I thank our heavenly Father that there are still real Christians who worship our God and spirit and in truth. I always look forward to reading the paper each time it comes, and it helps me in explaining the gospel plan and the reasons for our way of our worship services. I wish I could send you a large amount of support, but hope this small amount will help with some of the postage, at least. B.O.T. is priceless to me. Thank you so much for staying the course. – **Sue McDaniel.**" – TX.

"Please add the following to your mailing list to receive Banner of Truth. I gave them my last copy I received and they requested that I send you an email to get them ,put on your mailing list. I have been receiving BOT for a good while and feel it one of the best publications in the brotherhood. Thank you for your efforts and work to further the cause of Christ – **Tommy D. Boothe.**" – TX.

"Greetings in the precious name of Christ our Savior. I enjoyed reading your publication 'Banner of Truth.' A copy was sent to me by bro. James D. Cox and it was inspiring. Thank you for the great work. I am a preacher of the gospel that works at church of Christ, No. 12 MCC Road, Abayi Aba-Nigeria. The membership of the congregation is about four hundred persons. Most members speak English. I am therefore applying for copies to the BOT to be used in the youth class on Tuesdays...Earnestly waiting to hear from you, remain blessed in the Lord – **Christian C. Nwachukwu.**" – Nigeria. (*We are sending a bundle of 15. Please feel free to make copies as you wish, if you have means to do such – Editor*).

"We appreciate your excellent work with *Banner of Truth*. I distribute the bulk copies you send to me to each family unit who meets with the Murfreesboro church of Christ. Please change the mailing address...Also, we have enclosed a check to assist you in your efforts. Keep fighting you good faith! – **Steve Yeatts.**" – TN. (*Thanks Steve, for your*

*generous contribution to help in our work. We trust that your schedule might allow you to participate in our BOT lectures, June 5-8, 2006 – Editor*).

"I enjoy your bulletin so much. Please send one to my grand daughter. He address is...- **Pat Brumbelow.**" – TN.

"Thank you, to all the men and women that stand firm and proud in the Love of God. Many are without the truth and I thank the team working to produce B.O.T., for all their hard work. Thank God for your desire and passion for the truth...(a reader. *Sorry that I lost the name – Editor*).

"I received the article from Alan and see it in the January BOT. I really appreciate the effort that you and Alan put into this for me. I have read the article you published in December 2003, 'Urgent questions Which Elders should Consider.' I find this to be one of the best written articles I've ever read and it was followed by a great article, 'Where is the Church Headed?' by Bill King. These two articles really cover the problems within the church of Christ. Again I wash to say thank you for what you are doing for the Lord. You have been blessed with the ability to teach through the written word and I have been blessed by my association with you and your family. For that I'm grateful. I am very grateful that you have allowed me to be a part of your efforts in publishing Banner of Truth. You are often in my prayers and I thank the Lord for your talent and your desire to teach the true gospel of Christ. I shudder to think of the day when men of your knowledge and desire to reach people with the truth are gone – **Bob Price.**" – FL. (*Thank you for your genrouis support and encouragement. – Editor*).

"Greetings from the Hopkins Rd., church of Christ, in Richmond, VA. I just finished reading the January issue concerning God's Plan for Elders in the church. This is the best explanation I have seen and should wake a lot of people up when they really apply it to their own congregations. Please subscribe me. Thank you very much – Robert E. Lysen, Sr." – VA. (God's plan will work, but it must be applied – Editor).

"Hello dear brother. This is Ken Butterworth and I need any info you might have....Thanks for your EXCELLENT work with BOT. I am sincerely thankful for this fine publication. How we need more like it! Thank you for your every effort to eep pure the one church for which our Lord died; the church of Christ. You are an encouragement to me and I will continue to pray for you because I am so appreciative of your firm stand for the eternal truths of God – **Ken Butterworth.**" – AL.

"I am rejoicing over the soundness of the truth being delivered by your publication. Praise God! There are surely not many who stand for the truth today, but your publication surely holds true to its name. I thank God for your courage and boldness in proclaiming the →



gracious spirit of the new, is to ignore utterly the context and the clear reasoning of the Apostle. Place men with all their imperfections under a mere legal system embracing those high moral demands that reflect the infinite perfections of God himself, and what must be the result? Condemnation. Paul says, “when the commandment came, sin revived and I died” — thus the “letter kills.” On the other hand, the Gospel “gives life” by bringing poor sinners those rich provisions of grace in Christ by which they are saved from the guilt and consequences of transgression, thus, the new covenant is the “spirit that gives life” [*Commentary on Romans*, p. 94].

Amen. Let us speak “as the oracles,” not *chimney corner Scriptures* — AA

**Banner of Truth Lectures**  
June 5 – 8, 2006  
**Theme: Warring a Good Warfare**  
Curris Center – Murray, KY

## READERS’ RESPONSE

“...Please do remember that we have a printer and it is yours if the other offers do not materialize. Since we live in Obion County it would not require much effort to get it to you. My wife and I are longtime members of the Berea congregation near Rives. The congregation receives a bundle of BOT and it is distributed to the membership. I receive a copy here at the law office so I usually get a ‘head start’ on reading it before the congregation does. I cannot express to you how much I appreciate the work you are doing. Anyone who has attempted to write for publication understands how much time and effort goes into literary production. You have been blessed with the talent of writing and are using it powerfully... — **Roger T. Fisher.**” — TN. (*Your willingness to assist the Lord’s church is to be commended. Thanks for offering the printer – Editor.*)

“Here are two more names to add to your mailing list. Wishing for you and your family the best this holiday season and the New Year — **Charles Miller.**” — FL.

“Hope this finds you and sis. Pigg feeling as well as possible. I enjoy B.O.T. very much, and want to help... You might have the worst job in the world, but just remember, Paul didn’t live on easy street. Keep up the good work — **Gary Price.**” — KY.

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characteristic of the Lord’s church is that it was established on the Day of Pentecost in A.D. 33 as promised in Holy Scripture. Any “church” that comes into existence after A.D. 33 cannot be the Lord’s church. The term “church of Christ” is a Scriptural term (Rom. 16:16). It does not honor and glorify some man. It shows ownership and gives glory and honor to the one whose blood purchased it — Christ (Acts 20:28).

No, the “attend the church of your choice” slogan is not found in the Bible. It is the product of man’s thinking and man’s wisdom. All roads do not lead to heaven, as so many believe. Jesus is very clear in declaring, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me” (Jno. 14:6). There are not many “ways” and eternal life is found only by following the Savior.

Why not be a member of the Lord’s church which He promised to build? Obey the gospel of Christ so the Lord can add you to His church (Acts 2:47).

— 5810 Liberty Grove Rd., Rowlett, TX 75030

“Thank you for publishing such an informing publication, Banner of Truth. This helps us to know and to understand how certain things are affecting the Lord’s church. We have been receiving it for many years and we want to receive it continuously without missing any copy. Every year we have been missing one or two copies. BOT is certainly scriptural and appropriate for all to read. It has helped me immensely. Through reading your articles we come to know that the church of Christ is different from every other religious institution on the face of the earth. We are looking forward to receive regularly in the new year of 2006. May the Lord’s blessings be in abundance over all your endeavors. May God continue to prosper in your great work — **T. Ngulhopao, church of Christ.**” — **Namipur, India.** (*We are thankful that you find BOT worthwhile. It is our pleasure to send it, and this is made possible by our brethren who want God’s truth to be put in the hands of those in your country and others. I was associated with the work at Mt. Zion in Tamil Nadu, near Otty in the Nilgris for several years. I was in India on three occasions for up to three months each time. I think often of the brethren in India. May the Lord richly bless.* — Editor).

“Brethren, I would like to get your publication, Banner of Truth, and continue to support the good work ↑

The schools’ lectureships are also an effective means of influence. If the school includes among the lectureship speakers some of a liberal persuasion, sandwiched in between some sound speakers, this some times serves as a stamp of approval for those liberal brethren. Those who may be unaware of what they teach, or fail to teach in some areas, may well be led to accept things which are not according to truth as revealed in God’s word.

Most schools have various activities on campus for the special purpose of influencing young people, especially prospective students. In more recent years, a number of liberals have been presented as a special appeal to young people. It is a matter of act that the young are more easily fed a diet of liberal leanings than are those of more mature years.

The supplying of literature through school bookstores is also a means of some influence. And, as has been the case, literature by unsound brethren and even false teachers of denominations, is pushed for sale without any warnings of its danger. To some, whatever is offered by their favorite school must be all right, otherwise it would not be pushed for sale.

Then there are the “PR men” from the schools, whose job it is to promote their particular schools. These men look for opportunities to speak to congregations, whereby loyalty to the school may be encouraged and strengthened. It should not be overlooked that in some instances Preacher’s Meetings are used by the schools to extol the schools’ virtues. It is the case that some preachers, who are starving for some of the crumbs which may fall from the table of notoriety and acclaim, will be influenced to go along without asking serious questions or registering disapproval of things which are wrong.

It is a sad fact that a number of our schools are serving as the breeding ground grounds for false teachings, as their tentacles reach out in all directions, using a variety of means to captivate brethren upon whom they may depend for financial support and a supply of students. Whereas a few decades ago the schools were almost totally dependent upon individual support for their existence, now there is an intense effort to get support for the schools included in the budget of congregations across the country.

Liberalism in our schools could be virtually stopped, if the financial supporters had a mind to do so. There is no question but that those who supply the financial support of a school can in a large measure demand certain conditions within the school. This, however, can create a problem when a majority of the major supporters opt for a course which is not in keeping with the teaching of God’s word, nor of the course intended by the schools founder.

Though brother Willard Collins might be asked some timely questions as to what part he has played in the direction that David Lipscomb University has taken, the former president did make an excellent comment relative to the financial support of a school and the direction the school takes when he wrote:

Finally, the Bible and experience have taught me that a Christian school should receive the major part of its financial support and a great majority of its students from Christian people. Then, if the school heads in the wrong direction, support will be curtailed and the president and board will feel the financial pinch as a warning. If they do not heed the warning, then let the institution decline and die rather live and betray those who made it possible. (*Spiritual Sword*, July 1991, p. 32).

As stated earlier, it is our purpose in this issue of *Banner of Truth* to discuss some of the serious problems which exist in a number of our schools. Let me say again, however, that some truth has been taught in all our schools, but we are dealing with problems in our schools which bring about our downfall. To deny that error is being upheld in some schools, having done much damage already, is to be willfully ignorant of the facts. We begin by considering:

## I. PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Why are we starting with Pepperdine University? Several years ago I could have explained it by saying, “We are starting with the worst first.” But with the error which has been espoused by some other schools in more recent years that might not now be appropriate. It seems that a number are vying for the “worst” first place. Since it was necessary to start with some school, I have started in the far west and will move eastward, →

though space does not allow me to deal with all our schools by any means.

As far back as the 1950s distressing questions were being raised about Pepperdine. As a new Christian in 1953, I soon began to hear faithful brethren talk about the liberalism in then Pepperdine Christian College. Certain efforts were supposedly put forth to change the direction of Pepperdine. But with the passing of years it was evident that conditions had only worsened rather than improved.

Reproach came upon the church in 1976, due to a tragic sinful action by brother M. Norvel Young, Chancellor of Pepperdine. Nationally known *Newsweek* carried the story. Brother Young had plowed into the rear of a car, waiting at a traffic light, causing the death to two innocent passengers. Norvel Young, who had been arrested for driving while drunk once before this accident, had a blood content of .23 per cent alcohol, which is more than twice legally drunk in most states. The public reaction was unfavorable, due to the fact that Young received virtually no punishment for his crime, with no jail time at all. But *Newsweek* had something to say about Young's spiritual beliefs.

Even before the tragedy, Young was having doubts about his religion and his role as a spiritual leader. In recent years, serious financial strains and infighting at the school had torn Young's confidence. He says he took his first drink at 54, after recovering from a mild heart attack....Meantime, he began to doubt his church. "For years," he told the judge, "it has been increasingly difficult for me to accept the simplistic assumptions of the hell-fire and brimstone fundamentalism which most preachers in this church teach."

From this, it is easy to see that Pepperdine had gone far into liberalism back in 1976, by allowing a person with such problems to hold a high place of leadership within the school.

It has been common knowledge for several years now that Pepperdine has had teachers who were not even members of the church, and that activities took place on the campus which were a disgrace to the Lord's church. In more recent times there have been other happenings which show just how liberal Pepperdine has become, and the speed at which they

are going into complete apostasy. *The Nashville Banner* reported on March 22, 1992 that the apostate Pat Boone had been appointed chairman of Pepperdine University's Advisory Board. It is a matter of public record that Pat Boone has been an apostate for years repudiating New Testament Christianity in no uncertain terms.

Another revealing action at Pepperdine was noted in the Nov. 1992 issue of the *Christian Chronicle*. The article, "First Prayer," contained the following:

MALIBU, Calif. – D'Esta Love, dean of students at Pepperdine University, gave the first prayer by a woman in a convocation ceremony on Aug. 31. According to *Graph*, Pepperdine student newspaper, the university decided earlier this year to utilize women fully in all the institution's assemblies.

This action clearly shows Pepperdine's total disregard for God's word. With such disregard for authority, there is no stopping place, as time is showing.

Wayne Jackson, in the July 1991 *Spiritual Sword* says: "Pepperdine University has secured the services of Edward Fudge, author of the book, *The Fire That Consumes*, to propagate his dogma in a series of classes during their 1991 lectureship program" (p. 16). Fudge contends that the wicked are annihilated. This may sound good to those in error, but it is not true. In the same issue of the *Spiritual Sword*, brother Jackson comments, "Tragically, Pepperdine University is now one of the leading influences of digression in our great brotherhood" (p. 17).

Ken Chumbley writes; "F. LaGard Smith is a teacher at Pepperdine University....Some of his work may have some merit, however, much of what he has taught through his writings is not sound" (*Light for Living*, June 26, 1994). For an example of Smith's writing, note the following:

But any attempt to understand our human response to God's divine grace will be dangerously misguided if we see salvation resulting from anything we might do. Salvation is a divine act of mercy, a work of the spirit. Whatever else it might be, baptism is a response....One may get the idea that we can recognize salvation by a particular process. But in God's sight, our salvation exists ↕

Sinai" and "called Moses to the top of the mount" (Ex 19:20) where Moses received "the two tables of the testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." (Ex 31:18). That written upon the tables of stone was called "the ten commandments" (Ex 34:28), that is, the "ten words" [Hebrew, *dawbawr*]. These "tables were put in the ark...as Jehovah commanded." (Deu 10:5). In what sense, though, did the "letter...kill..." (2Co 3:6)?

A Jew entered the "covenant" with God when he was "circumcised" eight days after his birth. He came into this world with a great legacy. What happened to his "spirit" when he grew up and became a morally accountable person? Paul vividly describes,

Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet: but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting: for apart from the law sin is dead. And I was alive apart from the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died; and the commandment, which was unto life, this I found to be unto death: for sin, finding occasion, through the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me. So that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good. (Rom 7:7-12).

The "law," the "letter" — "holy," "righteous," and "good"— did perfectly what "law" is supposed to do. *It defined moral and spiritual excellence and obligation*. There was something, however, "the law could not do" (Rom 8:3), was not designed to do: forgive sin once committed. This reflects no flaw in the Law, rather "it was weak through the flesh" (v. 3). What the Law could not do, "God *did*...sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us..." (v. 3). So, "now we have been "discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter." (Rom 7:6). Using the abrogation of the marriage covenant through as an analogy, Paul argues that Jews were "discharged from the Law" (Rom 7:2), and that by the fact that they were "made dead to law through the body of Christ" (v. 4). Jews, as well as all people, now

live by "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:2).

In what sense, also, is the New Testament called "spirit," in contrast to the Old Testament? Does "spirit," in the passages we've considered mean "Holy Spirit," and does it mean that the Holy Spirit was/is more involved in the New Testament than in the Old? No. Peter says of the Old Testament, "no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2Pet 1:21). Jesus explains the matter saying, "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, they are life" (Jno 6:63).

The true Jew, Paul affirms, is — and has always been — one who is a Jew "inwardly," and one whose "circumcision is that of the heart" (Rom 2:28,29; cf. Deu 30:6). The true Jew, then, is one whose "circumcision...is in the spirit" (v. 29), which is to say through his obedience to the Gospel, the New Testament of Jesus (cf. Col 2:11-14); as opposed to one whose "circumcision...is in the letter," that is according solely to the Law of Moses (v. 29).

Once again, the lie is given to the idea that Divine Law has, or has ever had, a "spirit" level and a "letter" level. The terms are used to contrast two covenants. I. B. Grubbs, commenting on "newness of spirit" and oldness of letter in Romans six, also brings in II Corinthians 3:5-6 and says,

The legal covenant, as written and engraven on stones, is the "letter," and , as it is the "ministration of death," it is rightly called the "letter that killeth." By contrast, "the ministration of the spirit," previously called "the spirit" that "gives life," is the new covenant, mentioned in verse 6, of which the Apostle says that he and his apostolic associates were "sufficient ministers." To suppose, as did Origen, that the contrast between the "letter" and the "spirit" is a contrast between the literal sense of the Scriptures and some mystical meaning; or to suppose with many of our own time that it is a contrast between the written word itself and the Holy Spirit that gave it; or even to suppose, as do some [and they're still with us— AA], that it is a contrast between the legalistic spirit of the old dispensation and the →



## Spirit of the Law *Versus* Letter of the Law? (V)

Some think Divine Law has two levels of meaning and application, that is, a “spirit” level and a “letter” level. The “spirit” level is held to be the actual intent of God’s Law, and therefore superior to the “letter” level, which is what the Law says in so many words. We have shown — A) This view is false because the so-called “spirit” of the Law winds up being whatever whoever says it is. Such subjectivity renders the Bible contradictory and meaningless. B) Closely akin to this point, this view is false because there is no rule given by which to distinguish between what in the Bible is “spirit” and what is “letter.” C) This view is false, because the terminology — “spirit,” “letter,” and “law” — has been wrested from passages, which when accurately interpreted, are in reality drawing a contrast between the New and Old Testaments with no reference at all to the old “spirit-of-the-law-*versus*-letter-of-the law” idea. The whole thing has been fabricated from a misinterpretation; it’s a “chimney corner Scripture.”

The Constitution of the United States of America for some time has been subjected to the same kind of Spirit-*versus*-Letter-of-the-Law sophistry as that foisted upon the Bible. A literal cultural war is being waged between those who believe in “strict constitutionalism” and “original intent,” and those who view the Constitution as a “growing” document. In other words, it’s a battle between the “Spirit” people and the “Letter” people. It does not bode well for the future of our society that the “Spirit” people have had the upperhand for over fifty years.

This is why liberal Supreme Court Justices can declare organized prayer in public schools and other institutions a violation of the First Amendment. This is why the very general statement in the Preamble, “to...promote the general welfare,” is used “in upholding much recent social legislation, for which no warrant could be found in the enumerated powers of Congress” [*Columbia Encyclopedia*, p. 480]. There are other things like: homosexuality and abortion are protected under the “right to privacy”; and capital punishment, in my lifetime, has been declared both constitutional and unconstitutional.

Liberal brethren, like the liberal Justices, want to treat

the Bible as a “growing” document. When what they view as the “letter” of the Law doesn’t suit them, they set out to find the “spirit” of the Law; which “spirit,” of course, is whatever they determine it to be. Like their soul mates in the Supreme Court, liberal brethren figuratively don black robes and just “declare” what things, as it were, “promote the general welfare.” These are the brethren who declare “love,” “unity,” and “evangelism” to be *Spirit* stuff, but such ordinances as, “singing only in worship,” and “only one cause for divorce and remarriage,” they say, are *Letter* stuff. Actually, this is all just a bunch of stuff.

THERE ARE NO “SPIRIT” AND “LETTER” OF THE LAW. We’ve examined the three places in the Bible where these key terms, spirit, letter, and law, are brought together; and we have seen that in each case, that “spirit” has reference to the New Testament, whereas “letter” and “law” have reference to the Old Testament. It is so hard to purge common, yet non-Biblical, uses of Bible terms from our thinking; but this we must do.

WHY THE “NEW” IS CALLED *SPIRIT* AND THE “OLD” IS CALLED *LETTER* is both a fair and interesting question. Starting with “letter,” we note that it comes from the [Greek] word *gramma* which means “that which has been written; writing, document, record” [*Thayer’s*, p. 120]. Jesus said of Moses, “But if ye believe not his writings [*gramma*], how shall ye believe my words” (Jno 5:47). And Paul to Timothy, “from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings [*gramma*]...” (2Tim 3:15). “Writings,” in each passage, refers to the Law of Moses. It won’t do, however, to just say that the Old Testament is a document, and the New Testament something else. The New Testament is equally written in “letters”; it is no less a “writing.” Paul spoke of the “large letters” [*gramma*] with which “I write” (Gal 6:11). As to “revelation” given Paul of the “dispensation of that grace of God,” he said, “I wrote before in few words” (Eph 3:2-3).

This metonymy of *letter* for the *law* lies in the nature of the circumstances. Paul described the Old Testament as “the letter [which was a]...ministration of death, written, *and* engraven on stones” (2Co 3:7). This image takes the Jewish mind back to that gloriously terrible day when “Jehovah came down upon mount →

when *He* deems it to exist. (From an article by Dennis Gullede, *East End News*, June 16, 1996; a review of Smith’s *Baptism: The Believer’s Wedding Ceremony*, pp. 17-18).

This sounds very much like Rubel Shelly. Long after his apostasy, Rubel has been used at Pepperdine. George Pepperdine, the brother who made Pepperdine possible, surely had nothing like the present Pepperdine in mind when the school was started. As we have heard the expression so many times, George Pepperdine, along with the founders of most of our schools, would “Turn over in their graves,” if they knew the present condition of the schools which they founded.

UPDATE NOTE: If conditions have improved at Pepperdine, such has not come to my attention. If the conditions described above do not convince one that this school is an enemy of the cause of Christ, then it is unlikely that any condition would. — *Editor*

## II. ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Abilene Christian College (now Abilene Christian University), prospered under the influence of such men as Jessie P. Sewell, C.R. Nichol, R.L. Whiteside. Those days are no more. If space permitted, we could say so much relative to the error which has been espoused by ACU. We begin with a most serious matter:

### **Teaching of Evolution at ACU**

As recently as 1972, ACU claimed that one her functions was to “Exalt the Bible as the Word of God.” How shocking then that this same school, in 1985, would have two professors, Kenneth Williams and Archie Manis, teaching evolution. Wayne Jackson wrote:

It is now known that at least two professors have flagrantly taught the dogma of evolution. Moreover, there is ample proof that this subversion of our youth’s faith has been propagated at ACU for more than a decade, and that complaints relative to this matter have been ignored, denied, and concealed... (*Christian Courier*, Jan. 1986).

In January 1986, Bert Thompson, a graduate of ACU, came out with a 200 page book, *Is Genesis Myth?* In it the facts of evolution being taught at ACU are laid bare. The evidence is so extensive that it cannot be refuted, notwithstanding the attempted cover-up by ACU officials. The nine-page “Investigative Report” issued by ACU, dated Feb. 13, 1986, fell far short of any semblance of exculpation. Thompson’s charges stood and stand.

### **Methodist Preacher Appointed Editor of Optimist**

When it was reported that a Methodist preacher, 39 year old Michael O’Connor, was appointed editor of ACU’s student newspaper, the *Optimist*, some may have thought it was a joke; it wasn’t. The June 4, 1992 issue of the *Optimist* reported the sad fact in an article by Keith Alewine. “Michael, who serves as the pastor of the Trent Methodist Church, wrote that *Optimist* column, ‘No problem for a Methodist at ACU,’ in September of 1991.” Royce Money, President of ACU and known liberal from years gone by, was party to the appointment of the Methodist preacher as editor of the student paper.

Though O’Connor is not even a New Testament Christian, the above article says of him, “His conversion to Christianity started during the summer before his senior year of high school in Midland.” The article goes on to say that O’Connor, after searching for a lost ring, prayed to God: “If you’re up there, and you care about me and can help me, show us where the ring is. And if you can’t do that, then you can’t help me.” Praying to God in the theater, he looked again and found the woman’s ring,” so the story goes.

### **False Teachers Used at ACU**

Roy Deaver, a graduate of Abilene Christian before it began its drift into liberalism, speaks of false teachers at ACU. He mentions Max Lucado as recipient of ACU’s “Young Alumnus Award,” and then remarks:

...when the ACU Lectureship Director upholds and defends and continues to use Randy Mayeux, Marvin Phillips, Rubel Shelly, James Woodruff, and others of the same kind and brand of false teaching, and fails to recognize them as being “false teachers” — the fact of the →

apostasy of ACU rings out “loud and clear.” (*Contending for the Faith*, Sept. 1992).

### **ACU Personnel Leaders in a New Church**

The Feb. 1993 issue of *Christian Chronicle* carried a story about the “Abilene Mission Church.” Though said to be planted by the Minter Lane church, Kent Smith, a “specialist in domestic missions at Abilene Christian University,” is said to be “one of the leaders” of the new church. Reg Cox, “graduate student and part-time counselor at ACU,” is active in the leadership and is said to be the “announcer.” The article says, “One of the innovations in the church concerns the use of women. The five-member group song leaders is made up of three men and two women. the teacher of the children’s class system is a woman. Smith believes that in North America in the 20<sup>th</sup> century for women to read Scripture or help with the singing is “not usurping authority.” At what point do you suppose Smith would that usurping authority begins? There is something else which should be noted with regard to this new church. The designation of “church of Christ,” or “Christ’s church” is not used. Could it be that these people have been influenced by the apostate member of the church, Max Tipton, who started himself a church, called “Abilene Community Church?”

### **“People with a Purpose”**

In a full-page ad in the 1992 *Jubilee* publication, ACU says the university is “People with a Purpose.” We sincerely ask, What Purpose? Is it the destruction of the faith of young men and women through the teaching of error? That is what is being done.

At this point I must mention the professor of Preaching and Theology at ACU, Andre Resner. This man has an article in the Nov. 1992 issue of *Wineskins*, entitled “Christmas at Matthew’s House.” I have never read an article by any of my brethren which was more blasphemous than this one. In it, this doctor from Princeton, pictures Mary, the mother of Jesus, as a loose woman with child (denying the virgin birth) who fooled dumb Joseph with her “outlandish excuse.” Note the doctor’s words: “But there’s Joseph, crawling into bed with her every night the rest of his life, relying on a dream, believing in her word, that she hadn’t slept with another man and used him to cover her

shame...” Now, ask yourself, What is the purpose of those “People with a purpose” at ACU? Whatever it is, their actions say clearly that it is not in harmony with God’s word.

### **Dr. Royce Money’s ACU 1993 Lectureship Sermon**

The sermon, “On This Rock I Will Build My Church,” contains 14 points. Under the first point he says, “We must stop being influenced by radical voices on either side.” He avers that ACU “...stands where it has always stood – squarely in the broad middle of our movement to restore New Testament Christianity.” In all fairness, if one is so gullible as to believe that outrageous statement, then anything said in the remaining 13 points will certainly be accepted. How could brother Money make such a statement when men like Rubel Shelly, Jim Woodruff, Max Lucado, Mike Cope, Carroll Osburn, Marvin Phillips, and Randy Mayeux are speakers of the campus of ACU? One wonders about his conscience — is it “seared”?

His second point, “We must realize that unity does not mean uniformity of belief,” is followed by the statement, “It never has, it never will.” It is clear when the sermon is considered in its completeness that brother Royce Money holds to the “unity in diversity” doctrine. This is further confirmed by the following:

At the close of Steve Flatt’s lecture on “Leadership” during the 1992 ACU Lectureship, Dr. Royce Money, the President of ACU, said: “I want to encourage you toward unity in the body of Christ. The last and longest prayer of Jesus before he went to the cross haunts me. Surely the unity cannot come out of uniformity. We have *tried* that. It will have to come out of diversity, and out of other virtues.” (From “An Open Letter to Abilene Christian University, by Thomas Warren and Roy Deaver).

Point 10 says, “We must realize that the enemy is Satan and not each other.” Satan is the supporter of evil, there is no doubt. But how does Satan accomplish his objectives? Is it not through people, even including those workers of error within our brotherhood?

A number of good sounding statements are made by brother Money in his sermon, but the statements are called in question by the various actions †

those who deny. If the design is not intelligent, then it must be accepted as non-intelligent. It amounts to taking the position that: 1) All the things which exist, the creation with all its complex and intelligent design are the result of a higher power, a Designer, or 2) all things that exist are the result of a non-intelligent cause. Little wonder the Spirit says, “The fool hath said in his heart, There is not God” (Psa 14:1).

## **The Lord’s Choice In A Church**

*Marvin L. Weir*

In most newspapers that advertise the worship services of churches in that community you will these words of encouragement: “Attend The Church Of Your Choice.” These words please most people. It is the “democratic” thing to do. The majority of people believe such a statement brings glory and honor to Christ. But does it? This is the question for us to consider as we turn to the only book that can give us a truthful answer – The Bible.

Long before the birth of Christ it was prophesied that “in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be let to another people: but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (Dan. 2:44). Jesus, during his ministry on earth, said to Peter, “I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:18-19). One will note that the word “church” is singular, not plural. Christ promised to build only one church – His church. Other inspired Scriptures affirm this truth. The apostle Paul notes that there is but “one body” (Eph. 4:4). One will also observe that the Scriptures affirm that Christ is the “head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22-23). Paul also records that Christ has promised to save only his “body” (Eph. 5:23).

Since God does not lie (Tit. 1:2) and His Word is always true (Jno. 17:17), let us ask some questions. If Christ were on earth today would He attend His church or some man’s church? Would He attend the church He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28) or one

Many of those who disbelieve in God, who claim to be scientist, believe creation is the result of a non-intelligent cause. But “science” is supposed to mean knowledge. Where is the evidence, knowledge, that the things which are, are the result of non-intelligence? Even the scientist who doesn’t believe in God, is evidence of an intelligent designer, who gave man the ability to believe or disbelieve. — *Editor*

purchased with man’s money? Would the Lord attend a church of which a man or group of men serve as its head or the one of which He is its head? Do you believe that Jesus Christ would attend a church governed by the creeds and votes of men that continually change or the church that is governed by His Word which has long been settled in heaven (Ps. 119:89)? Does or does not the Lord’s choice in a church matter? Which church would He choose to attend? Would Christ choose the church that wears his name and this gives Him the honor and glory rightly His, or would He choose some church wearing the man-made name that honors a human being? These are questions that cannot be ignored and they deserve an answer.

Most people today choose a “church” for the wrong reason. Some choose a particular church because of its beautiful architecture. We are not commanded to worship the building so this is not a valid reason. Others choose a “church” solely because of what it can offer their children. They have in mind fun and games, pizza parties, ski trips, camping trips, volleyball, softball, and an appealing chauffeur (oops, youth minister) to shuttle the young folks to and from their entertainment appointments. The Lord’s church is not in the entertainment and recreation business. Parents should be the “youth directors” and they are the ones responsible for all recreation and entertainment engaged in by the young people. Some choose a “church” because of its size as if large numbers are to be equated with spiritual success. The truth is that only a few were saved in the ark (I Pet. 3:20) and a few, not many, will be in heaven (Mk.7:13-14).

If one is truly interested in the salvation of his soul does it not make sense to choose to attend the Lord’s church? One distinguishing — *Continued on P. 14*



## THE DISCUSSION OF OUR SCHOOLS WILL CONTINUE

I don't know of a single one of our schools which has been characterized by a liberal course during the past several years, including Harding, that has shown any noticeable improvement. Quite to the contrary, the liberalism has only worsened. Why should brethren continue to hold on to and support a school where there is virtually no evidence that it will change? But as we have seen from the past, some will continue to support their favorite school regardless of the course it takes.

When I began this article, "Will Our Schools Be Our Downfall?" I did not anticipate that it would be necessary to have "Part 3." Though I had not intended to discuss all our schools, I did plan to discuss some that we have not considered. Our "Part 3" will include: Freed-Hardeman University, David Lipscomb University, Faulkner University, Michigan Christian, IBC, with some general discussion of preacher training

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## ID — Intelligent Design

In increasing circles of today, including a number of judges, anything which even hints at the existence of God is **OUT**. That which in virtually any way opposes the existence of God is **IN**. Fifty years ago such a time as this almost never crossed my mind. This was also true of the people I knew.

A matter which has been in the news in recent times is the discussion of what has been coined "Intelligent Design," or "ID." In an article in the *Murray Ledger & Times*, Dec 20, 2005, entitled "School Awaits 'Intelligent Design' Ruling," a forthcoming decision by U.S. District Judge John E. Jones III is discussed. That ruling by the above judge has now been made.

What is Intelligent Design? The following definition is given in the article: "Intelligent design is the theory that life on Earth was produced by an unidentified intelligent cause." This is what the Dover Area School Board, in Pennsylvania, required its biology curriculum to include. A number of school boards in other places have been considering the same thing. The above view does not mention God. It only states that life was produced by an "intelligent cause." It is

schools.

Some of the material used in this part of the article is reproduced from an article by me in *Banner of Truth* more than three years ago, entitled, "Cause for Concern — Our Schools." The material is still timely and has not been read by more than two thousand of our present readers. The dangerous influence upon congregations by our schools has not diminished during the past three years, it has increased.

UPDATE NOTE: Due to the lack of space, I have not included an update with regard to Harding. There is much that could be said, but if anything has occurred which indicates any turning back from the course of liberalism I'm not aware of it. But how good it would be if we could say "Our Schools" are turning back to get on the right track. This could happen if those who support the schools demanded it and withheld their financial support until a change was evident. But at this point, I see no evidence that this is likely to happen. — Editor

hard to imagine any normal person opposing this explanation of life. Of course those who truly believe in God know, based on mountains of credible evidence, the intelligent cause is God.

Of those eight families which brought a suit against the school board to have Intelligent Design removed from the curriculum, it is said: "The plaintiffs argued that intelligent design amounts to a secular repackaging of creationism, which the courts have already ruled cannot be taught in public schools." That there is a move in our country to completely secularize our society is an inescapable conclusion, if reality is to be recognized.

The Federal Judge did rule against Intelligent Design being taught in the public school. No doubt but that this was a great disappointment to those who thought Intelligent Design might escape the bias of judges who do not believe in God.

To my knowledge, there is not anyone who would deny that there is "design" in the creation. It is hard to imagine anyone who would deny that this design involves the greatest of intelligence. But there are ↴

which take place at ACU. There are also a number of dangerous statements as well. We do not have space to cover them.

### Dr. James Dobson to Speak at ACU

The following excerpts are from an article in the *Abilene Reporter-News*, Oct. 3, 1995.

Admission to the 7:30 P.M. meeting in Abilene Christian University's Moody Coliseum will be free; however, tickets must be obtained in advance to aid in crowd control....

ACU will award Dobson and honorary doctor of humanities degree before his speech....

"In our lifetime no one in Christian circles has had a greater influence for the good of families as James Dobson," said Dr. Royce Money, ACU President. "He is an outstanding educator, author and psychologist. It is out of gratitude for his great influence that we will honor him."

It should be noted that Dr. Dobson is included in the "Christian circles" of which brother Money speaks. It is my understanding that James Dobson has never been a New Testament Christian, but rather a member of the Nazarene Church. Yet, brother Money claims him to be a part of those "seek[ing] to be the church which belongs to Christ."

UPDATE NOTE: Nov. 2005: Several things have transpired at Abilene since this was first written more than nine years ago. We begin by noting some things written by Chuck Pearson of events when he was a student at ACU. The following excerpts are from *The Pawn of Truth*, which brother Pearson edits:

Dr. Royce Money, President of ACU.

In the Fall 1997 issue of ACU Today, Dr. Money wrote an article entitled "A Letter To Parents From President Money: What Every Parent Should Know About Christian Education." In this article, he writes: "ACU was founded in 1906 to serve primarily students affiliated with the churches of Christ....But ACU always has welcomed students of other Christian faiths, as well as some who were not sure if they were believers at all. We have learned to be inclusive without forfeiting our distinctive heritage" (p. 2). What does Dr. Money mean by "other

Christian faiths"? Does not the Bible say there is only "one faith" (Eph. 4:5)?"

Max Lucado – ACU Campus Revival:

On October 6-8, ACU hosted a "campus revival" as a part of the "Spiritual Emphasis Week." The guest speaker was Max Lucado. Max is an ACU alumnus, and has been decorated by ACU as "Alumnus of the Year."

Brother Pearson tells of studying "preaching" under Dr. Andre Resner (ACU Bible professor and author of "Christmas At Matthew's House" mentioned above). Brother Pearson said they watched videos in Resner's class, entitled *Great Preachers*. Of the ten such videos of ten preachers, not one was a member of the church. We have noted just a portion of the information given by brother Pearson.

### Woman Speaker from ACU Addresses Mixed Seminar

Brother Ben Vick carried the following in the January 20, 2003 issue of The Informer:

A few days ago the Shelbyville Road congregation received an invitation from the Elmwood Church of Christ in Lafayette, Indiana, to attend a seminar conducted by "Dr.," Jeanene Reese of Abilene Christian University. The letter of invitation said, "Your congregation is invited to attend a seminar on Ephesians presented by Dr. Jeanene Reese, on February 1, 2003, Saturday. Her topic is Living A Life Worthy of My Calling."

Brother Vick, in a conversation with the Elmwood preacher, Gayle Crowe, learned that the seminar was for men as well as women. He quotes Gayle Crowe as follows: "Dr." Jeanene Reese had men in her classes at Abilene Christian University and that it was decided to open up the seminar for men as well."

### Youths from Churches of Christ Gather with Others for Holy Week.

Loretta Fulton (Reporter-News Staff Writer, [for ACU paper] April 5, 2004) wrote an article about "Passion or Holy Week," which began with Palm Sunday. Note the following quote from the above article: "The youngsters will meet each evening through Friday and then will top off their experience with a sunrise service on Sunday on the east steps of the →

Biblical Studies Building at Abilene Christian University.”

Another interesting note in the above article was the following: “The youth leaders who planned the weeklong event said they met no resistance from parents, who sometimes aren’t as open to new ideas as their children.”

Much more could be said about ACU which evidences the further departures from God’s word.

### III. HARDING UNIVERSITY

With regard to spiritual problems, Harding had some quite a number of years ago, which resulted in a teacher firing. Though that was a step in the right direction, the school would be plagued by a number of false teachers in the years ahead who would be allowed to teach their error to young men and women who were students of the school. We have had a son, a daughter and daughter-in-law who received degrees from Harding in the 1970s. There were danger signals appearing then, which would become more pronounced in more recent years.

A school’s convictions can be easily seen by the teachers it employs and the speakers invited to the campus. Therefore, our primary discussion of Harding University will deal primarily with these two groups of individuals.

#### ***Teachers of Error Used at Harding***

**James D. Bales.** The late brother Bales did much writing while he was at Harding. Much of his material was excellent, though this cannot be said of everything he wrote and/or taught. He created and propagated a doctrine on the subject of marriage and divorce, which became known as the “Bales Doctrine.” This doctrine caused many problems within the church, and sadly its influence is still being felt in many places today.

**James Woodruff,** a teacher at Harding for a number of years, wrote a book which teaches what we might call a form of the Bales Doctrine. Later he published a book, *The Church in Transition*, which was clearly designed to change the church, doing away with much of its distinctiveness. Woodruff is not now at Harding. Several of us wrote the President to voice our opposition to him; whether this had anything to do with his leaving Harding I do not know. Woodruff’s

book is full of error.

**Jerry Jones,** some time head of the Bible department at Harding, became involved in the Crossroads Movement while at Harding. He is no longer at Harding.

#### ***Teachers of Error on HU Campus***

**Mike Cope.** When Mike was preaching for the College church in Searcy, where many of the people from Harding worshipped, he mentioned in the church bulletin, “...some things which have encouraged me lately.” Listed were: Rubel Shelly’s book, *I Just Want To Be A Christian*. Monroe Hawley’s book, *The Focus of Faith*, *IMAGE* and the *Christian Chronicle*. He declared these “have provided edification for many Christian homes.” Those acquainted with these books know what a gross misrepresentation Mike Cope made. In 1968 Mike wrote in the church bulletin: “Diversity is one of the blessings of the College church.... We hold doctrinal views that representing the whole gamut of brotherhood thinking.... We are ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal.’” With the apparent acceptance of Cope’s liberal leanings that long ago, it is no surprise that Harding would be using him now.

For Insight ’92, at Harding, Make Cope was billed as the featured speaker, giving him the opportunity to influence hundreds of impressionable young people with his liberal philosophy. Just in case anyone has any doubts as to the liberalism of Mike Cope, let him explain the action which transpired the year before when the ungodly publication *Wineskins* was commenced, with Rubel Shelly, Mike Cope, and Phillip Morrison as editors. The most outrageous and degrading article to appear in that paper of apostasy was an article by Andre Resner, entitled “Christmas at Matthew’s House,” in the November issue. The virgin birth is called in question, as it is implied that Mary gave birth to a child fathered by some man and fooled Joseph with her cover-up story. Mike Cope and the other editors are not without guilt in this scandalous piece of writing. A school which would uphold a preacher who is party to such ungodliness and liberalism, has fallen far short of its founder’s intentions, and is not worthy of support by faithful brethren.

**Jeff Walling.** This young man from Mission Viejo, CA has gained great popularity in

some circles, including Harding University. Yet his very liberal stance is a matter of fact. Though there is extensive information as to the teaching and practice of Jeff Walling, the quotations in the following paragraph will be from brother Goebel Music’s book, *Behold the Pattern*.

We now go back to Feb. 1987 and a convention of the Ozark Christian College (Christian Church school) at which Jeff Walling participated as a speaker. The far-out group of singers known as Acapella were also participants, and Walling spoke highly of them. In Walling’s speech he spoke of the Christian Church people as “My family” and “brothers,” saying he loved being there. In the course of his speech he also said, “...doing all the right things,...punching all the right buttons,...following the rules,...is a miserable way to live. And, besides, following all the rules is not why you’re going to heaven.” While relegating instrumental music to the area of things which “aren’t really very important” in the Ozark speech, he did later attempt to say that he did not believe it should be used in worship. But his true feeling with regard to instrumental music is seen in the following statement from his pen, December 1, 1988:

Finally, if one believes that instrumental music in worship is wrong, and yet does it anyway, he is committing sin. If one substitutes God’s command to sing with a command to play, he is committing sin. But in my opinion, I must not judge the state of a fellow Christian who, in good conscience, approves singing with an instrument. To do so would place myself in jeopardy of grievous sin indeed: Judging a brother by my opinion.

He is simply saying that the use of instrumental music in worship is largely a subjective question. If one believes it is all right to use the instrument, and it isn’t counter to explicit Bible teaching, it is right for one to do so. This explains why he can with a good conscience worship and fellowship with the Christian Church, and others who are not New Testament Christians. So, his statements relative to the sin of instrumental music, when carefully weighed, mean absolutely nothing.

*IMAGE* magazine is a very liberal publication. Of it Walling says:

If choosing to read is the best choice a person can make...then choosing to read *IMAGE* is one of the wisest. How desperately we all need something positive and spiritually nourishing to read and enjoy! *IMAGE* provides me with refreshing thinking and a Christian approach to everyday challenges. This is a magazine for Christians who are looking for good things in life. In short: Read *IMAGE*, your soul will thank you for it” (Vol. 5, No. 9, Sept. 1989, p. 30). [It can destroy one’s soul. – Editor].

At the Soul Winning Workshop in Tulsa, March 30, 1990, Walling spoke on the subject, “That They All May Be One.” Readers, you be the judge as to whether he sets forth the “oneness” for which our Savior prayed in John 17, or the current liberal idea that unity means including all those who merely claim to believe in Christ, regardless of their doctrinal positions.

...in spite of what some of my brothers think, I think there’s going to be a ton of folks that God’s going to give grace and mercy to...I don’t think...a small crowd. “...Jesus doesn’t say...the obedient might be one...that the church of Christ’s might be one...the text says “believers”...Jesus asked that we throw a calf rope around all of those who just believe in Him, and pray and work for the unity of all believers...True commitment to Jesus will cause me to be out there rubbing shoulders with all believers...but brethren and sisters, we’ve got to reach outside our doors...the hand of every true believer in Jesus to seek some kind of oneness.

Harding seems to have a close relationship with brother Walling. He spoke on the 1985 Harding Bible Lectureship, was a speaker at the 1986 and 1993 Harding Youth Forums, and a speaker at the 1993 Harding Uplift (featured once again alongside Acappella).

A further note about Harding involves the stand of the administration. Gary Colley writes: “Harding University sponsors a ‘Bible Bowl’ for a large area of young people from several states, and insists in their advertising that all young people are to use the NIV. What a shame.” (*The Southwesterner*, Dec. 10, 1995., p. 1).