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"We enjoyed the Lectures. Nice town....We are praying for your health. Enjoy B.O.T. Keep up the good work. We love ya'll." — **James and Jean Berry, AL.** (*Your interest, which brought you several hundred, miles is appreciated — Editor.*)

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Hornets — Increasing Influence of Politics Upon The Lord's Church

During the past 80 years we have seen the influence of politics upon the church grow by gigantic proportions. Anything which has a detrimental influence upon our Lord's Church is a timely matter for discussion and should be considered and studied careful.

I can imagine someone saying, in view of the above headline: "There he goes again, discussing politics!" No apology will be made by me for discussing any subject which has to do with the well-being of the church. One can name a variety of subjects, which some had rather not discuss, but that does not mean there is no need to do so. Some of the things which people most need to hear are not things they like to hear. Included in this is the subject of politics, which affect the church.

We are living in a time when the mention of politics is heard every day. Since our government is run by a political system it can be expected that this subject will continually be before us. Since this fall is election time, even more will heard about politics than the usual. Politics affects us all in one way or another, and now, the same is affecting the church as never before in our time.

It is a time for serious concern to those who love the Lord and His church.

Politics – A Sensitive Subject. That is true, but it ought not to be so. Anything which has so much to do with our lives, and with the church, should be discussed in a regular and sensible fashion. Over the years it has appeared that people are more likely be sensitive about subjects about which they feel uneasy for one reason or another. Some people are sensitive about the subject of smoking, because they smoke and feel uneasy about it. The same can be said about a number of subjects.

When it comes to things that cannot be upheld by the teaching of God's word, people doing them tend to be sensitive about discussion of such matters. I remember brother Guy N. Woods using an example to show that people who do not have justification for their practice are reluctant →

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to engage in a discussion of the same. He said, "For the same reason a muley cow will not engage in a hooking contest." I have found this to be true with regard to some who hold political views which they cannot justify by God's word. A *muley cow* is one without horns.

The Objective in Our Discussion. We are concerned with the increasing influence that politics is having upon the church in recent years, whereas the time was that politics had little influence upon the church. It is not our objective to discuss individual politicians of recent times, though there is a time for this, but rather to examine the influence which is now being brought to bear by politics in general. Let me say here, that there are no perfect politicians and never will be. It is also a fact that there are some in both political parties which are not noted for upholding that which is in most keeping with Christian principles. Therefore, when referring to the major political parties, we have reference to that which is the general

tendency of the party, and not just with one individual. Before dealing with the more recent political influence we shall reflect upon the political realm as I saw it a long time ago, when there was little influence brought to bear upon the church, or our religious world in general.

When I came on the scene eighty years ago, I was not aware of what was going on in the political world. I had just turned four years old in 1929, the year of the great stock market crash. At four, the stock market didn't register with me. It would not be long, however, until I would know and remember some things in the realm of politics. I can remember people talking about people committing suicide because they had lost their fortune.

I remember Roosevelt running for office and winning, and I remember hearing about the "New Deal." A world-wide depression engulfed our country as well as other countries of the world. President Hoover would be blamed for decades for the depression, especially by the opposite party.

The public works programs inaugurated by Roosevelt are well remembered. There was the WPA and the CCC, and others. Farmers were paid to kill their hogs and destroy them, and they would be allowed to plant only a limited amount of crops. A program which Roosevelt wanted to inaugurate was the NRA, but the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional.

The economy did improve during the 1930s, but was still sluggish until World War II brought on a boom. I knew people who hated to see the war end, since they were making so much money during the war. It is amazing how much some love money.

President Roosevelt died during his fourth term in office. I well remember receiving the news while on a merchant ship in the North Atlantic. Harry Truman became the President.

I do remember something about the 1930s which has to do with the spiritual realm. That is, crime was not as frequent as it is today. It is a common thing in our time for people to blame much of crime upon poverty. If their thinking is valid, it would have meant that most of us would have been criminals back then, because most of us were dirt poor. Yet, where I grew up there was little crime. †

Quoting the late Carl Sagan again, evolutionists say all of this happened over "billions and billions and billions" of years. In other words, beginning with, let us say, rocks, dirt, gas and water, the evolutionist says that minute, imperceptible transitions spread out over eons is how we have come to the present reality. But now, suppose one counterfactually granted the billions of years and the gradual transitions; they are still going to run into the Law of the Excluded Middle. At some point on the time line you a non-human *thing* becomes a human thing. That means a non-human thing either gave birth to a human thing, or some force cause it to transform from one thing into another.

To believe in evolution you have to be irrational. You just "believe" it because you want to.

Evolution has ETHICAL PROBLEMS. In fact, evolution and ethics do not mix.

If evolution is true, then man is nothing more than "matter in motion." The only thing that separates him from the rest of the organic, or inorganic, world is molecular organization.

Evolution runs afoul of the fact that man possesses qualities that are not common to the rest of the world, rather are unique only to him (man). These qualities are: mental, moral, emotional, aesthetical, etc. Each of these qualities is a part of man, and yet all are separate from his physical person. That is, one might dissect a human brain, but he will never locate the mind. He might observe a beating heart, but he will never locate love and compassion. He might explore the entire human body, but he will never locate the conscience that cries out in pain when violated.

How does evolution, a completely materialistic philosophy, account for these transcendent and immaterial qualities of man. The answer is, he doesn't and he can't. C.S. Lewis spoke of man's inherent "sense of oughtness." Oughtness is not inherent in matter. No one says of a falling rock: "You ought not hit me." Where did matter contrive such? Why does a piece of matter feel the need, in many cases, to sacrifice and give of himself for the benefit of others? What of "right" and "wrong" "beauty" and "justice" and "worship"? Not only must evolution have life coming from non-life, and organic from inorganic, he must also have "...the immaterial from the material, the spiritual from the non-spiritual. And, this doesn't make ANY sense!"

Our beloved brother Roy Deaver summed it up this way:

If it is the case—

That man has a sense of accountability;

That man does possess a conscience;

That man is the possessor of reasoning power;

That man is a worshipping being;

That man is an aesthetic being;

That man does have a sense of justice, a sense of compassion, the ability to dream and to work and to make dreams realities;

That man does have a natural and abiding concern about God;

That man does possess a firm belief in the immortality of the soul and a marvelous hope with regard to life hereafter;

And, if it is the case—

That there can be no effect without an adequate cause;

That something cannot come out of nothing;

That life can only come from life and that every seed brings forth after its kind;

And, if it is the case—

that there is nothing—absolutely nothing—in the theory of evolution which would explain or account for the moral quality of man —

THEN, it is the case that THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION OUGHT TO BE REJECTED, immediately, thoroughly, decisively, and without hesitation.

Our objective has been accomplished. No proposition can possess so many problems of an insurmountable nature and even be considered feasible. The same difficulties, and some in addition, that "staggered" Darwin when he penned his infamous book, continue to exist and persist.

The positive side of the matter lies in the fact that the options are very narrow, what logicians call strong disjunction. Human origin is due either to evolution or creation. Evolution, as we have seen, is not, cannot be true. If evolution is not true, then we are left with creation, which means we are the created and we have a creator (cf. Rom 1:25). Evolution is akin to idolatry. It would have us "worship...and serve...the creature rather than the creator." This, and many "problems" stem from the "problems" of evolution. —AA

the so-called evolutionary mechanisms. There is no force in Nature that could have jump started the process, and no force in Nature that could be pushing it along. All of the time in the world couldn't create or modify one thing.

As to the various dating methods, it should suffice to note that everyone of them are based on the same assumption made by the false teachers in Peter's time, that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2Pet 3:4-6). They, as evolutionists now, "willingly" ignored such non-natural events as the process of Creation and later the Flood —

The earth was "compacted out of water" (2Pet 3:5); Adam was a one-day-old adult; already-bearing-fruit trees, though full of annual rings, were one day old; and the heavenly bodies, rather than being where they are due to billions of years of moving away from the center of things, were in a moment "set" (Gen 1:17) there. Later, the "earth that then was" (2Pet 3:6) came to be "overflowed with water" (Gen 7:11); "the fountains of the great deep were broken up,"(7:4) and "every living thing ...was destroyed from off the face of the ground." When I climbed Jade Mountain in Taiwan (13,000 feet+) and found fossils of sea creatures there, I was reminded of all these things. Nobody can stick a skull bone fragment into some machine, or subject it to some test, and then declare, "This bone came from a man-like creature who lived a 100,000 years ago." Such tests are based on assumptions, and prove nothing.

Finally, as Professor J. Howard Trull has noted, "The law of probability does away with *all time* when one considers the infinite complexity of the 'simplest' form of life. Time never makes the *impossible* become *possible*."⁴

By summary, evolution has INHERENT problems, and it has SCIENTIFIC problems. Finally, let us consider certain,

PHILOSOPHIC PROBLEMS of the general theory of evolution. After it is all said and done, questions about origins and the total explanation of reality are philosophical questions. Under this general heading, let us consider that evolution has up front and in-your-face LOGICAL PROBLEMS. Logic, the science of thought, is predicated upon certain Laws of Thought.

Logic concerns itself primarily with the Law of Rationality. This "law" says, Men ought to accept only those conclusions warranted by the evidence. Put another way: Stuff ought not be considered true unless proved. There is no evidence that compels one to conclude that life came from non-life; that order can from disorder; that organization came from randomness; and so on. Evolution simply has no evidence to justify it. Rational people will set forth evidence in the form a sound argument which bears the conclusion which they claim to believe. No evolutionist has ever made an attempt at the formation of sound argument the conclusion of which is: Therefore, we just "got" here.

Rational people also recognize the intuitively true Law of Contradiction which says that any doctrine that implies a self-contradiction is itself a false doctrine. But we have already seen that evolution says (1) That "uniformitarianism" is and is not true; and (2) That the principle of entropy is and is not true.

Though this is reserved for another point, there is also the fact that evolution implies that there existed a transitional form(s) between that which was distinctly non-human and that which was human; therefore, it implies that there existed an entity that was and was not.

Another way evolution flies in the face of logic is seen in light of the Law of Excluded Middle. This law as applies to propositions states that every precisely stated proposition is either true or false. As applies to objects, it states that every object either possesses a particular quality or it does not. In other words, a precise, which is to say an unambiguous statement or assertion, must be either true or false; and, as regards a specific characteristic or attribute, and object either has it, or it does not. What is the point? ↓

WHY DISCUSS THE ABOVE EVENTS?

At a time in the past, politics had little influence on the church; there was one thing, however, which would incrementally influence the church in time to come. I speak of the socialistic influence which began under President Roosevelt. President Lyndon Johnson and his "Great Society" put it in overdrive. Socialism is now a rather powerful influence in our society, and many want more of it.

The Influence of Socialism within the Church. We are now seeing this influence of socialism within the church. It is now aptly called the "Social Gospel." There are a great many things going on now within the church which are in no sense of the term justified by God's word, as a work of the church. There is much emphasis now upon the "Here and now," not the "hereafter." This first began within the denominational religions but has now been adopted by many of our brethren. In many instances within the church today, it is more a matter of what pleases the people than what pleases the Lord. A "thus saith the Lord," is not being hears as it once was, when there was greater concern as to what pleased the Lord rather than man.

Other than the above influence, politics had little influence upon the church in those earlier years. Many of the secular matters dealt with by politicians had nothing to do with the church and did not directly affect it. Tax policy and many civil laws passed by our political powers have nothing to do with the church or spiritual matters.

One thing which was very significant relative to both major political parties was that they had moral standards that were much higher than now. I've lived in a time when the greater majority of people, regardless of their political affiliation, would not lie nor steal. We've all heard the expression, "His word was his bond." That is the way it was. In those days most people were willing to work for a living. Such sinful and immoral acts as abortion and homosexuality were not favored by either party. To uphold and encourage such would have spelled defeat in the greatest measure back then.

Political parties do change. The stage today is far different to what it was when I was growing up. This is just a matter of fact. A good example of change in political parties occurred when a friend of mine was commended for being a member of a certain political

party, other than what he used to be. He responded by saying, "It took me forty years to learn. I didn't leave the party, it left me." Many people say the same thing in our time. Both major political parties are not the same today in a number of important areas. Especially is this true with morality.

When a political party changes to uphold more immoral activities, then its influence upon the church is clearly realized. When a society becomes tolerant of, even encouraging immorality, Christians and their children often become tolerant and accepting of evil things. Liberal politicians are much more likely to be liberal with regard to morality in general and sexual immorality in particular. The state of the home in our country is in great trouble. The very idea that some in the political circles support what they call "marriage" between homosexuals is no less than a shame and a disgrace to our society.

There is no doubt in my mind that our immoral society, which is upheld by many politicians, has contributed to the teaching and practice of many ungodly things by religious denominations. When people claim to believe in God and then practice that which is an abomination in His sight; that is about as low as they can get. Yet, some churches are in the forefront of promoting ungodly things.

As society goes, so goes the church, to some extent. When people "call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter" (Isa. 5:20), it is much easier and likely that members of the church will engage in evil. That doesn't make it right, but that is the way it is. Just think how many are now calling ungodly things good! You hear politicians upholding abortion and homosexuality, and a great many in society are doing the same thing. I cannot prove it, but I wonder if there are not more abortions by Christians now than fifty years ago? Abortion is such a common thing now, and when evil becomes so common people tend to be desensitized. Another matter is that of out-of-wedlock births. I know there are many more within the church today than fifty years ago. Could it be, at least in part, due to the fact sex before marriage is much more common and accepted now?

Freedom To Worship. Is this a political matter? It surely is! If some political forces could have their way, God would be out! The anti-God movement is gaining strength all the time in this country. I don't →

¹Williams, Jon Gary, *The Other Side of Evolution*, P. 12

²Morris, Henry, *The Twilight of Evolution*, P. 35

³Quoted in *Spiritual Sword*, Vol. II, No. 3, P. 21

⁴"Life—Comparative Anatomy *Spiritual Sword*, Vol II, No. 3., P. 9

know your age, but whatever it is, did you ever think you would see a time when some many efforts would be made to put God down as is the case now? Virtually all manner of evil can be set forth in our schools, but the mention of God, Christ and the Bible must be kept out. How can a member of the church uphold a political party which is more in favor of such than another? There is no perfect political party, and never will be, but who can deny that one party may be more in keeping with Christian principles than another?

The time can come that we will no longer have the freedom to worship which we now enjoy. This could happen if a political party which opposes God should come to power. Could that ever happen here? We'd better believe it could.

WHAT ABOUT THE HORNETS?

"Hornets" are a Bible word. The Lord would use hornets to drive out the Hivites, the Canaanite, and the Hittite before the Israelites (Ex. 23:28). In other references the Lord used the hornet to drive out the enemies of the Israelites (Deut. 7:20; Joshua 24:12). We are referring to Hornets in a different way in this discussion, though there may be a similarity in the fact that Israel's enemies were obviously afraid of the hornets. Some members of the church are obviously afraid of hornets now, in a different way.

Getting into a "Hornets' Nest." Take it from one who knows, talking to brethren about politics can be like getting into a hornets' nest. This certainly has to do with the influence of politics within the church. And I do not hesitate to affirm that one has a right, even a responsibility to speak about politics when such is germane to the well-being of the church. In spite of this, there are some who stubbornly disagree. In this opposition to speaking about politics, when such affects the church, a number of things are evident.

1. Those who are strongly oppose speaking about politics are usually reluctant to have an honorable discussion of the subject. This would seem to indicate that they know they do not have any ground to stand on.

2. The opponent may say, "Politics and religion don't mix." I don't know where this statement originated, but I disagree with it, when speaking about politics which affect the church are involved. I will concede

that politics which uphold that which is contrary to God's word should not be mixed with Christianity. In fact, no Christian should support such. I have noted that those who say politics and religion do not mix usually engage in politics themselves. They are often sensitive about the subject, and don't want it discussed publicly. They almost always are affiliated with the more liberal party. In fact, I don't recall even one person who is not of a liberal political persuasion saying that "Politics and religion don't mix."

3. Do those who oppose the public discussion of politics within the church believe it is scriptural to "compartmentalize"? By that term is meant the ability to separate or divide things in one's mind or activities. It signifies different compartments. It seems that President Clinton was commended for being able to compartmentalize. I guess an example of that would be his sexual activity with the young intern while carrying on business from the White House.

Consider an example of "compartmentalizing": A person declares that he does not believe in Abortion and Homosexuality, that the Bible teaches such is sin. This would be in the compartment of the church or spiritual things. But in another compartment, the political, he can support the politician who upholds and encourages these two sins. The folly of this far-out thinking is that in serving the Lord as a Christian, there is only ONE compartment, and in that compartment we are allowed to do only that which is in "the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17). We cannot, in another compartment, uphold or encourage that which is contrary to God's will. How, in the name of common sense, can a Christian do in politics that which is contrary to God's word, and still claim to be a servant of the Lord? How about an elder or any other Christian taking this position? But this is a matter of fact.

4. Should politics take first place over spiritual matters? Apparently some think so. What about the person who detests such things as the welfare state, abortion, and homosexuality, and yet serves as a leader in the political party which is known for promoting such? Christ said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness..." (Matt. 6:33). It is a matter of fact that some put their political loyalty before their loyalty to Christ. I know this to be a fact. I've seen it happen. †

is the Law of Biogenesis. But, as we noted, the evolutionist has to "believe" that at least once, sometime in the past, that law was not uniform. Somehow life sprang from non-life. If, though, he rejects uniform biogenesis, then he must also reject "uniformitarianism"; if he rejects "uniformitarianism," he must also reject evolution. Then again, if he rejects "spontaneous generation," to the acceptance of "biogenesis," then he must reject evolution for he has no cause for the origin of life. No problem; it is all still a fact of science.

Next in line is the THERMODYNAMICS PROBLEM. Whenever I hear the word "thermodynamics," I have to smile. A preacher came through Taiwan while I was a missionary there; he preached in a meeting and I translated. I had asked him beforehand to let me know if he planned to use any out-of-the-ordinary vocabulary. He said, "No." In his very first lesson on "Evidences," he came out with, "the first and second laws of Thermodynamics." I could have strangled him.

In the classic work, *The Genesis Flood*, Whitcomb and Morris note that,

The two most basic and certain of all laws of modern physical science are the first two laws of thermodynamics. The first law of thermodynamics is the law of energy conservation, affirming that although energy can be converted from one form to another, the total amount remains unchanged—energy is neither being created nor destroyed at the present time. The second law states that, although the total amount remains unchanged, there is always a tendency for it to become less available for useful work. (P. 222)

The second law is a problem for Evolution. It states that "...the amount of useful energy in any system is always *decreasing* and there is a tendency toward greater randomness."¹ The universe, like a giant clock, is slowly running down with the passing of time. In contrast to this fact, evolution postulates that there exists a tendency toward a higher degree of organization. Well, you can't have it both ways.

Professor Henry Morris notes,

It would hardly be possible to conceive of two more completely opposite principles that this principle of entropy increase and the principle of evolution. Each is precisely the converse of the other.

As Huxley defines it, evolution involves a continual *increase* of order, or organization, of size, of complexity. The entropy principle involves a continual *decrease* of order, of organization, of size, of complexity. It seems axiomatic that both cannot possibly be true. But there is no question whatever that the second law of thermodynamics is true!²

In light of this, it is not so amazing that evolutionists have little to say or write about the laws of thermodynamics. The Bible, of course, realizes and reflects the truths of this Law of Nature,

And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the works of thy hands: They shall perish; but thou continuest: And they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a mantle shalt thou roll them up, As a garment, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, And thy years shall not fail. (Heb 1:10-12).

Again, the situation is one in which a person is forced to either adhere to that which has been verified and is observable (i.e. 2nd Law), or that which cannot be verified or observed, and that which contradicts so many major, undisputed facts.

And, finally THE TIME PROBLEM. In the early years of the evolution movement, it was realized that among other things, great quantities of time had to be provided in order for the theory to be feasible. The field of *geology* answered the call, and provided, at first, thousands and thousands; then later, millions and millions; and now, as Carl Sagan said in that droning voice, "Billions and billions and billions of years.

As to the importance of time in evolution, George Wald has said, "Time is the hero of the plot... Given so much time the impossible becomes possible, the possible probable and the probable virtually certain. One has only to wait: time itself performs miracles."³

Let's think about this for a moment. Even if it were counterfactually granted that the earth and universe were billions of years old, what would this prove as far as Evolution is concerned? Time is *not* a force or a cause, it is simply a measurement. Time doesn't push anything along, you've got to have a force or a mechanism. We've demonstrated the fallacies with →

Evolution (5)

A few years back, my father-in-law and I built a barn behind my house. I had to get various permits before and during the process. I came home from the permit place grousing to my wife: "I've already spent \$177 before I've put a shovel into the dirt."

Let us borrow and convert this into an analogy as it relates to the problems of Evolution. I only had to get a permit before I could start on my barn—and granted, it was a headache—but, Evolution deals with way more than permit problems. We have considered seven—count them, seven—INHERENT PROBLEMS of the theory of evolution. In other words, before proponents of this theory can even put a shovel into the ground, much less build their house, they must face and solve these seven problems. They have not; they cannot; they will not: talk about your blind faith. It only gets worse.

Evolution is bit like Premillennialism in that both theories are complex and convoluted. It makes it hard to know where to start; which is why we have been attempting to categorize various aspects of the theory under certain "problem" headings. These "problem" distinctions are admittedly to some degree artificial and arbitrary, thus some overlapping is inevitable. Our next broad category of "problems" is: SCIENTIFIC PROBLEMS of the general theory of evolution. In this category, however, the intention is to deal with some problems which belong uniquely in this realm.

Convince a person that something is "scientific fact," and he will likely concede the point under discussion. More times than we would like to count we have been told that evolution is just that: a fact of science. That raises the question as to how something comes to be considered to be a scientific fact. By what method does something attain the ranks of scientific knowledge?

First in line, then, of the problems under this heading is: THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD PROBLEM. The standard "scientific method," by which laws and facts are formulated involves: (1) Observation, (2) Statement and definition of problem, (3) Formation of hypothesis, (4) Deduction from hypothesis of prediction, (5) Experimentation (and modification), (6) Theory, and (7) Law.

What should stick out like a sore thumb here is the fact that the whole issue of the origin of life does not fall into the realm of science, and cannot be dealt with on the basis of the scientific method. A hypothesis, for example, is an idea, an assertion, which can either be verified or falsified by observation or experimentation. The fundamental claims of evolution can neither be subjected to observation or experimentation. One evolutionist, F.J. Ayala, has said that a hypothesis which cannot be subjected to observation and experimentation "does not belong to the realm of science." Yet, Ayala is an evolutionist; which means he "believes" something that is not a fact of science.

Then there is the BIOGENESIS PROBLEM. The Law of Biogenesis holds that all life comes from preexisting life and that of its own kind. Unlike evolution, "biogenesis," meets every criteria of the scientific method, and has been verified by observation countless millions of times.

This is why, as we noted in a previous installment, honest evolutionists admit, and blindly believe, that spontaneous generation must have occurred at least once in the past. Spontaneous generation, however, is a hypothesis which can and has been falsified. We learned as children how Pasteur tested and falsified the idea of spontaneous generation of life. Consider the irony that many scientists who "believe" in evolution must, and do, accept a proposition that has been falsified (i.e. spontaneous generation), and reject one that has been verified and established (i.e. biogenesis). It is maddening.

Evolution's religious creed is: Uniformitarianism. This basically says that we should not bring in outside factors—read "God"—to explain present realities. In other words, forces and principles which we observe now are the same forces and principles that brought everything into existence. So, the evolutionist says that a reasonable person starts from the premise of uniform, continuous forces and principles and explains everything, including origins, in that light. Well, one of the most uniform forces of nature ↴

5. One may become your enemy because you speak about politics. Their politics are more important to them than your friendship, to say nothing of how the Lord views the matter. Speaking the truth will some times make enemies. Stephen was stoned to death and John the Baptist literally lost his head. These are good examples of truth making enemies. It cost them their lives. Paul asked the Galatians the following question: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16). Yes, that is some times the case, though it ought not to be. When the truth disturbs a person, that one should do some soul-searching to see what is right. The love which is used most extensively in the New Testament is concerned with the well-being of the person to whom it is shown. But the person in error may react differently. Some times an individual will "take it out" on the person who is presenting the truth, instead of conforming to the truth.

THE PREACHER AND HIS RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING SPEAKING ABOUT POLITICS

As stated earlier, it is my conviction that not only does one have a right to do so, but he has a responsibility when such affects the well-being of the church. I have written and carried articles in Banner of Truth concerning politics. Most responses from readers have been very positive, but a very few have been negative. I remember on preacher who was greatly upset, and made some very critical comments about me personally, but he never did prove his point that one could support the political party which is foremost in supporting abortion and homosexuality. He even asked why I mentioned those two things. Well, the Bible teaches those things are sin. That is the reason why I called attention to those things. Some things in politics are not biblical issues, while others are very much so.

Should a preacher, teacher, or individual Christian fear the hornets? It is true that politics may stir up a hornets' nest! But what are we to do? Keep quiet so we will not disturb the hornets? Some do, but is that in keeping with our responsibility as a Christian?

For example, should I, as a preacher, stay away from the subject of politics for fear that I might upset some? If I'm afraid of stirring up the hornets' nest about politics, what about drinking, dancing, smoking, and a

host of other subjects which some do not like? You see, if we compromise on one point, it is easier to compromise on another, or others.

The Part We Should Play? As citizens of our country we have the opportunity to support those politicians who are most in keeping with the teaching of God's word, whoever they are. We are indeed living in "perilous times." We, as Christians, will never be in the majority, but we can make a difference if we try. I've heard people say, "All politicians are just alike." Do they actually believe such an absurd thing? It makes about as much sense as saying, "All animals are just alike."

Some members of the church say, "I will just not vote." When one of the politicians is more conducive to the furtherance of the gospel of Christ than the other, a failure to vote is to support the other politician. Members of the church in an area like ours could have considerable power in electing officials who have the highest moral standards, in the wide sense of that term.

To me it is encouraging to think about the trials faced by the early Christians. They lived in the midst of an evil world, without many of the opportunities we have, yet they did not throw in the towel and give up the race. Their future reward meant more to them than anything else in the world.

We should thank God that we have the opportunity to influence the society in which we live by participating in the political process. —Editor

Notice To Foreign Readers of BOT

A concerned reader of BOT has contributed \$1,000.00 to pay for the increased postage to foreign countries. Due to this, we will be able to continue sending bundles to other countries. We are so thankful that this individual is willing to have this part in getting the word out to those in foreign countries in spite of the greatly increased cost. Counting the bundles and individual copies, we now have about 330 copies of Banner of Truth going to other countries. We have many positive responses from those readers, and are thankful we can do this. —Editor

“New worship style revives spirit in mainline Protestant church”

The above is the title of an article by John Seewer of Associated Press, on the Religion page of *The Paducah Sun*, May 26, 2006. Above the beginning of the article is the picture of a movie house in Maumee, Ohio, which is being rented by St. Paul’s Lutheran Church. We shall note some of the information contained in the article.

This should be of great interest to God-loving people also as a warning of what can happen when people put their emphasis upon pleasing men rather than pleasing God, because it portends the things which are taking root within the Lord’s church and are growing vigorously. Some of the things already taking place in a great many congregations would have seemed just as far out to faithful brethren forty years ago as does this “New Worship Style” in the Lutheran Church in Maumee, Ohio today.

Looking back over the past few decades, we can clearly see how religious denominations have influenced our own brethren. Like the Israelites of old, who would not hear the voice of Samuel, but said, “...nay; but we will have a king over us; that we may be like all the nations...” (I Sam. 8:19-20). The things we are seeing within the church today we never saw early on. Some members of the church who are in their twenties and thirties are not fully aware of what is taking place, since they didn’t live and know the church before some of this commenced. Multiplied thousands of you people never heard the kind and of teaching and preaching which was common almost everywhere the church existed.

Some of us, who have been around longer, knew the time when the term “contemporary worship” was unheard. The emphasis was on following God’s word as closely as possible, requiring a “thus saith the Lord” for what was taught and practiced. Worshipping God “in spirit and in truth” (Jno. 4:24) was a respected guideline.

Some of us remember when some young preachers and some not so young became enamored with what

denominational people were doing. They saw things being done which drew numbers, yet the troughs from which they were being fed were spiritually empty, or filled with contaminated food. In spite of this some younger men began to proclaim with great exuberance, “What we can learn from our religious neighbors.” And, learn, they did. That “learning” is being put into practice in too many places in our time. Prospects are for it to increase.

Below, in the indented section, are selected paragraphs or statements from the article being discussed. We are not carrying the entire article.

MAUMEE, Ohio — The pews have been replaced by upholstered chairs at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church. The altar is now an expansive stage that accommodates drummers, guitarists and keyboard players. The most popular seats in the building are the two leather couches that make the church’s entryway feel like a hip coffee shop.

St. Paul’s rocks — with dancing, clapping and happy music that is making its contemporary services ever-more popular, eclipsing the traditional Sunday morning services it still offers.

“We needed to offer something different because people were leaving to find churches where they could express more joy or celebration,” said the Rev. Roger Miller, St. Paul’s pastor. “The church is just looking for a way to speak to the culture.”

“Mainline churches are way behind in the ballgame because they were so steeped in their worship traditions,” said Ronald Shifley, pastor at Spencerville United Church of Christ, which started a contemporary service two years ago. “Dow the road, churches will have to move to contemporary worship in some form or they’ll cease to exist.”

Contemporary services are less formal than the coat and tie services. Praise bands take the place of an organ or a choir. There’s dancing instead of ↴

sinners (Bible love means we seek another’s best interest). However, we do not accept, support, nor give a platform to those whose sole intent and purpose is to promote their sinful activity. This group’s goal is not to learn the truth and come under its hold, but to promote the acceptance of their immoral behavior.

Shall we accept an “organized group” of thieves or murderers, or drunkards or extortioners or idolaters, or witches into our midst and beg our acceptance and toleration as they promote their immoral and deprave lifestyle? What society calls “gays,” the Bible calls homosexuals, sodomites, abusers of themselves with mankind. They are listed among many groups of sinners (I Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:18-32).

Yes, Jesus ate with publicans and sinners (Matt. 9:10-11) But these individuals were interested in their seeing and hearing Jesus. Their agenda was not to promote their wickedness and convince Jesus to accept and tolerate them. Their sinful behavior was not the issue with them. They wanted to hear the Lord. And Jesus taught them. Jesus didn’t tell them, “I’m not attempting to correct, much less condemn you.” He told men and women everywhere. “go and sin no more” (John 8:11), except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Lk. 13:3,5), “woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites...ye blind guides... blind Pharisee...white sepulchers...ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? (Matt. 23:23,24,26,27,33), “there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Lk. 15:10).

Our “dialogue” and “facilitated discussion” with sinners is to “reprove, rebuke and exhort” (2 Tim. 4:2). This means we identify and expose sin for what it is (reprove), convince and convict those who are living in sin (rebuke) and then exhort them to repent and come out of it in complete obedience to the Gospel. This is what the Bible calls love (John 14:15; Lk. 6:46; Eph. 4:15). This is being a true friend of Jesus (Lk. 15:14).

Some Personal Notes

My Physical Health. As most of our readers know, my health at this time last year was not good. I was not able to attend the BOT lectures at all.

I’m thankful to God that my health is much better now. I was able to attend more than 20 of the lectures this year, and also to speak once. A number of brethren were good to help out in various ways during the lectures, this included Alan Adams and Richard Guill.

I am not back to my state of health two years ago, but I’m able to continue my work with Banner of Truth. I still don’t know for sure if I have the incurable pulmonary fibrosis. But since there is no cure, I just take things day by day. I greatly appreciate the many prayers that have been offered in my behalf. I do take more time to rest now than I used to take, and with that time off, getting the paper out is a Full-Time Job. I spend many hours in connection with the paper, other than getting the material together, printing it, and doing all that is necessary to get it in the mail. I have many requests for information, keeping the mailing list up to date, and other things.

My Request for Financial Help. Since I no longer receive any support from the Dexter congregation, our support from our church work has been reduced by well over half. This works a hardship, but we will make it. Brethren have been so very good to respond to our plea for help, and this will enable us to receive more from our work with Banner of Truth, which is, as I said earlier, A Full-Time Job. But I’m so thankful that at my age of 80 years I’m still able to do what I am doing. It is not only my work that is involved with the paper; my wife also puts in much time with each issue.

We send out a financial report to those who contribute to our work fund. To any interested in supporting this work, we will gladly inform as to the amount of support we receive.

Thanks to Our Helpers. If it were not for others who help get Banner of Truth out, we could not do it by ourselves. A number of people give many hours of labor each time an issue is prepared and mailed. But our helpers are having a part in getting the truth which people want out to several thousand. Hundreds of copies of BOT go to other countries. Thanks to all who have a part in making this possible.

—Editor

Abilene Christian University Allows Homosexual Rights Group on Campus

Garland Robinson via Seek The Old Paths, June 2006

According to a SOULFORCE Press Release (3/27/06), "Equality Riders completed a full day of presentations, discussions and worship with students at Abilene Christian University today, the first school to allow the Riders full access to campus. The school, affiliated with the Church of Christ, has about 4000 undergraduate and 800 graduate students studying a range of liberal arts and professional programs.... They have allowed us to present in small classes and big auditoriums, fed us and let us worship with them. We are truly grateful for the dialogue we have had here with students, faculty and administration.... Equality Riders worshipped at the University Church of Christ just off campus on Sunday night, taking communion, singing and praying with about 800 students. On Monday, Equality Riders joined students in Moody Coliseum for ACU's daily chapel service.... For lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students here it's like their school has said, 'Yes, you do exist.' Despite the warm greeting extended to Soulforce Equality Riders, Abilene Christian University continues to hold a student conduct policy forbidding 'homosexual behavior,' which has led to students being expelled from the school.... The Soulforce Equality Ride is a journey to change the heart and mind of America on the issue of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) equality." The full article can be read at: www.equalityride.com/article.php?

A web posting by Jack Reese, Dean of the College biblical studies ACU, declared, "We were the first school to allow them to come on campus and make presentations to our students, the first to receive them with full hospitality.... Most of the Christian schools are keeping them of-campus completely—or trying to.... After dinner, about 10 SF (Soul Force, – editor) folks and about the same number of Bible faculty had a discussion for an hour and a half.... People comments were candid, but there was a lot of grace in the room/ People listened.... We didn't talk a lot about texts, but we did some. Each person made it clear that he/she

knew there were differences. Jake (Jack Reitan, the group's 24 year old director, –editor) kept saying, 'I know you think we are sinners.' We tried to correct him. "We are all sinners, Jake.' It's not the 'being' gay that anyone was attempting to correct, much less condemn."

Jack Reese wrote his piece for the internet in Indianapolis, Indiana while attending "the national Preaching Summit, with mostly Independent Christian Church preachers." He said, "the support has been overwhelming." "I could not speak this morning except out of the overflow of emotion, through tears, and through great passion about what God's voice might be saying to us in such a circumstance, about our middle class, white, American values. It will be a while before I get past it. I'm not sure I'll be "normal" again..."

The above quotes were taken from: "Hope Network Ministries," www.lynnanderson.org/content.asp?CID=89561. Other related web pages are: www.equalityride.com/article.php?article_id=248 www.acu.edu/events/news/archives2006/060224_soulforce.html www.acu.edu/events/news/archives2006/060324_Equality_Ride.html www.acu.edu/events/news/archives2006/060328_soulforcefollow.html

This is simply another episode of the long list of departures from the faith this school has been involved in for many, many years. The so-called Equality Riders is a group of homosexual activists (I refuse to call them gay) who are traveling the country trying to raise awareness and acceptance of their chosen lifestyle. I say "chosen" because that is exactly what their deviant behavior is. Homosexuality is sodomy and there is nothing gay (happy, merry) about it. This SIN is condemned throughout the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22-30; 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; I Cor. 6:9).

The Lord's people do not incite violence. Nor do they stage protests and marches. On the contrary, we are caring, compassionate and loving toward

kneeling. Skits are acted out. Hymn books are missing. Scripture often still plays a role but in less formalized readings.

People who might be uncomfortable going into a church have no problem going to a theater, said member Patti Rish. A few always wander in late.

"They don't come in with a quiet reverence," she said. It's just like going to the movies." Instead of popcorn and soda, churchgoers grab cups of chocolate-flavored coffee and jelly doughnuts on their way into worship.

The service starts out with a skit about golfing and religion, and moves into rock 'n' roll with a heavy drum beat that brings nearly everyone out of their seats.

The article points out that "St. Paul's" has lost about fifty members due to the changes which have come about. These people evidently still had a little concern about the Bible and its teaching, but of course they were not simply New Testament Christians. The Bible knows nothing of a "Lutheran church," but only that which Christ built and purchased with His blood.

But there is a note of interest concerning those who attend the "traditional service" also offered by the St. Paul Lutheran Church. The interest of which I speak is how that people are influenced by things with which they disagree, after a period of time. For example, Dave Metzger, director of evangelism, said the church "became two totally different congregations." But, he says, "that's started to change. Some members who attend the early traditional service now linger afterward and have coffee with the contemporary crowd. Some are crossing over to attend both services."

The "spirit" which "revives" by the new worship style is nothing more than the desire to be entertained. These people could not be serious about God's word and what it teaches. This is fast becoming a trend with so many religious folk. It is not a matter of what pleases God, but rather what man likes and what pleases him. This is not a new thing, but it has much more common that it used to be. It is growing by leaps and bounds.

A serious question we should ask ourselves as members of the Lord church is this: How many similarities do we see in the Lutheran Church we are discussing and some of our own people? No, we

haven't gone as far as they have gone, as far as I know. But we have gone a lot farther than we should have gone. Aren't we seeing more and more efforts to please the people rather than the Lord?

Haven't "skits" become quite popular among some of us? What about choruses? What about "Praise Teams"? What about all the emphasis upon entertainment of church members and their children? Haven't we come a long way in the direction that St. Paul's Lutheran Church and many other denominational churches have gone? What about "contemporary worship" by our own brethren? Isn't this happening in more than just a few places?

The article points out the these mega churches which have adopted "contemporary worship" are growing rapidly. People like it. As we mentioned earlier, some of our brethren are "learning" from the "nations around us." What we see in the religious groups around us, we will some day see, at least to some degree, in the midst of our brethren. Yet, when brethren set about to warn the people, there are those who like to cry, "Don't be so negative."

With the many stern warnings about departures from the faith which are found in the New Testament, it does look like people would be more aware of the danger faced by those who would serve the Lord. Some of us are aware of what happened to the church more than a century ago, when the greater majority of the members left the "old paths" and went into liberalism. Brethren, make no mistake about it — we are seeing the same thing happen now. In fact, the change has gone a long way, and many seem to be totally unaware.

—Editor

7th Annual BOT Lectures June 25 — 28, 2007 Murray, KY, Curris Center Third Floor Theater

Why not make plans now to profit from the knowledge and experience of those whose combined years amount to hundreds of years of experience in Gospel preaching.

Draw the Line Where God Has Drawn It

Fred R. Bogle

“God...hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son...” (Heb. 1:1-2). “This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him” (Matt. 17:5). “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (Eccl. 12:13). This will establish the foundation for this study.

We are living in an era unlike any that we have ever seen. We can relate very vividly to the time when the Lord’s church was strong and the fastest growing religious institution. The reason being – the truth, the gospel of Christ; God’s word was preached in its purity and fullness without fear, favor, appeasement or compromise. Faithful brethren preached the word of God; lived by it; stood by it; debated and defended it. They exposed false doctrine and unscriptural practices. They identified those who were guilty of all types of sin and error, yet with the true love our Lord commands.

However, there are faithful brethren today, who express deep concern and are persuaded that they can see certain trends and inconsistencies with the truth cropping up, which if continued could or would lead to further departures from the faith. This matter deserves sober biblical study.

The following four-part question has been asked: (1) How much false doctrine and error can one teach or preach? (2) On what subjects can error be taught? (3) By whom can false doctrines be taught? (4) And the above still be fellowshipped on lectureships and in gospel meetings? The reply is usually, None and No One. This is the correct and biblical answer.

Another question is: “Is this the way it is always done today? That question draws a variety of answers or comments, one of which is, Where Do You Draw the Line? That is indeed a good question, however the answer seems to be obvious – DRAW THE LINE WHERE GOD DRAWS IT. Or, better yet, accept the line which God has already drawn. But someone says, “That’s not easy to do.” But it can be done and must be done in order to please God. God does NOT Tolerate false doctrine and the sin which it produces. We know that, “All scripture is given by inspiration of

God...” (2 Tim. 3:16), and “that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation...” (2 Pet. 1:20). We are commanded to “study...rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). And, “...try the spirits whether they are of God...” (1 Jno. 4:1).

Christ said, “...if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Jno. 8:31-32). A false teacher does not continue in God’s word. Christ prayed to the Father, “Sanctify them through the truth: thy word is truth” (Jno. 17:17). Christ said, “...the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (Jno. 12:48). Peter wrote, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth...” (1 Pet. 1:22). Who can deny the above powerful scriptures? It is obvious from that one must not compromise truth, nor tolerate false doctrine. Also, we can know the truth and know where God has “drawn the line” by his word. Furthermore, God expects us to know.

Did not Paul draw the line when he wrote, “But though we or an angel from heaven. preach any other gospel than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8)? Who will deny that the inspired apostle “drew the line” on all false doctrines and false teachers? Note the strong emphatic and unconditional consequences: “let him be accursed.” Jude expressed it so well, so emphatically and convincingly when he wrote: “Beloved...it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3). That does not sound like Jude would tolerate false doctrine and error on any subject, nor the teacher. Jude also drew the line where God has drawn it.

The above passages are sufficient to convince any open-minded, honest, soul-searching Christian that we must not tolerate the preaching of false doctrine, nor fellowship the false teacher. The Psalmist said, “I hate every false way” (Ps. 119:104). This must be our attitude and we must stand solid on God’s word. If we love God, his word and the souls of men, we will obey God’s word.

There is no “loop hole” for: the weak, cowardly, politicians, friends, etc. We must accept the

“line.” God has drawn it! The apostle Paul again used strong and powerful language in rejecting false brethren and false doctrine; and also rebuked a fellow apostle (Peter), for his hypocritical conduct. He did not excuse, overlook or compromise with him (Gal. 2:11-14). Paul also wrote, “And because of false brethren unawares brought...To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour...that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (Gal. 2:4-5). We see from God’s word that the gospel of Christ is the saving power (Rom. 1:16), not false doctrines of men. Paul asks the brethren at Corinth “...for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness” (2 Cor. 6:14). We cannot homogenize truth and error and please God.

Various reasons or excuses have been given by some for not having drawn the line where God has drawn it — Such as: “let’s not splinter,” “Let’s not divide,” “let’s have unity,” “be tolerant and patient,” and “show love.” Indeed we must possess the characteristics of a Christian. Our attitude of mind and our actions must be in harmony with God’s will. However, faithful brethren and churches of the Lord will not allow, condone, endorse, tolerate or fellowship false teachers, in order to have peace and unity. There is only One Way to have biblical unity, and that is to Obey God’s Word. Man often seems to want union rather than unity, for which our Lord prayed (Jno. 17:20-21). “There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling...” (Eph. 4:4).

Some have an unscriptural concept of love, tolerance, patience and unity and have “copped out” or failed to take appropriate scriptural action or perform necessary discipline, as a result. Paul said, “For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10). We must “obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). Paul asks some serious questions and offers inspired instructions: “And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel;? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God...Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you” (2 Cor. 6:15-17).

With regard to discipline, Paul said, “Now we com-

mand you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly...” (2 Thess. 3:6). Earlier, Paul wrote, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Rom. 16:17). Indeed, God’s word has unequivocally Drawn The Line, and so must faithful brethren and faithful churches Draw The Line. God expects us to know, among other things, when and why the line must be drawn.

Let it be clearly understood without mistake or doubt that such things as: whims of feeble man, traditions, disagreements, private interpretations, nor anything of that sort are under consideration, but rather the inspired word of God as we’ve discussed. Neither is it suggested by any stretch of the imagination, that one should act too hastily, that is to “shoot from the hip,” or to be “too quick on the trigger.” God has spoken, He has drawn the line, and we must accept it

Faithful brethren, and all others who would please God, must understand and accept the profound TRUTH that God has spoken. His word is the infallible standard of authority, not some man. Indeed, we should give credit to whom credit is due; respect and honor to honor is due. However, faithful, beloved, well-known and respect brethren of the past, regardless of how much they were/are loved, nor the great good they may have accomplished, are the standard of authority in our pursuit of eternal life in heaven. Christ said “All power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18).

Brethren, may we all submit humbly to His Will and Draw the Line where God has drawn it. Let us be challenged to think seriously on this matter. Remember, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God” (2 Jno. 9). Let us “fear God and keep His commandments” (Eccl. 12:13).

Author’s Note: The above article was published in two other sources several years ago. It was needed then, however, it is needed much more today. Some in writing use the word “Drifting,” but that word does not seem appropriate today. It seems more like – “Going at full speed...” The New Testament warns of departures from the faith. Let it not be us.

—1121 Esenada Dr., Orlando, FL 32825