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The True Church

By Wes Auger

(Reprinted From *The Baptist Challenge*, January, 1962)

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” — Mt. 16:13-16.

In the above portion the word “church; appears for the first time in the New Testament. This is a poor word. It does not give proper expression to the original word. The English word “church” appears in the New Testament 80 times and the word “churches” appears 35 times. In every case save one it comes from the Greek word “*ekklesia*.” The more common Latin form is *ecclesia*.

The one exception is in

Acts 19:37 where the English “churches” actually is from a Greek word meaning “temple despoilers.”

This Greek word “*ekklesia*” is a much used and a much abused one. In the Greek world the common meaning of “assembly” (for that is what “*ekklesia*” means) was a legislative body, assembled for some definite business — like our state legislative assemblies.

If you will look at Acts 19:32, 39 and 41 you will find a key to the use of the word for in each instance as the word “assembly” is used it is actually the Greek “*ekklesia*.”

In Hebrews 12:23 you will again find the English word “assembly” but here it comes from the Greek “*penaguis*” which means “a mass meeting” and can best be illustrated as an assembly of an entire nation for a festival — such as the Olympic games.

The word “assembly” is also used in James 2:2 and here it comes from the word that means “synagogue!”

Now look at Acts 7:38 where we read about “the church in the wilderness.” This is again the word “*ekklesia*.” So Jesus recognized that there was a legislative body, doing business, be-

fore He came to build *His* legislative body, doing business!

That is why he said, “I will build *my* church!” If it was going to be *His* it was going to have to be like everything else that is *His* — better, unique, different! *His* church can not be the same as the one in the wilderness. He isn’t continuing something or reviving something. He is establishing something *new!*

The Importance of the Local Assembly

As you read the New Testament it becomes very evident to you that local bodies of believers are stressed and upheld all through the sacred writings. Look at some passages: “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth” (1 Cor. 1:2; “Unto the churches of Galatia” (Gal. 1:2); “Unto the church of the Thessalonians” (1 Thess. 1:1); “Unto the church of the Thessalonians” (2 Thess. 1:1); “John to the seven churches which are in Asia” (Rev. 1:4); “Likewise greet the church that is in their house” (Rom. 16:5); “The churches of Asia salute you” (1 Cor. 16:19); “With the church that is in their house” (1 Cor. 16:19); “and to the church

in thy house” (Philemon 2).

The word “church” is never used as a collective word to describe “all Christians” or “all believers.” The word “church” is used in an institutional sense but when the Holy Spirit has anything to say about the people of God and the true testimony of God He refers to “the churches.” To see this for yourself look up the following passages: Acts 15:41; 16:5; 2 Cor. 8:24; Rev. 22:16; 1 Cor. 16:1, 19; Gal. 1:22; 2 Cor. 8:1; Rom. 16:4.

The importance of the local assembly is seen not only in the way the Holy Spirit magnifies it and emphasizes it but also in the fact that membership in it is emphasized as well. There is a ridiculous and foolish teaching that has found its way into certain circles that scoffs at “church membership” and speaks proudly of “having its membership in the *true* church — the great *one body*.” This teaching would despise the true church of God and make nought of the clear teaching of the Scriptures on the matter of membership in the local assembly.

Over in Acts 1:15 the Holy Spirit begins a “chain” concerning the growth of the member-

(See AUGER on page 7)

The Book of Revelation -- Message #22

Women In The Bible

By M. L. Moser, Editor

“And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their

deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the

Spirit saith unto the churches”
—Rev. 2:18-29.

This morning, the Lord willing, we intend to finish our messages concerning this church in Thyatira which we find here in chapter 2 beginning with verse 18.

We’re not going to take time to read the entire passage, but before I begin, I want to mention this book, **The Two Babylons** which I mentioned earlier this month. I called your attention to the fact that the Book of Revelation speaks of the churches of the last days and particularly the church of the Antichrist. I talked to you about the things that this apostate church had, that it was ancient Baal worship brought over into Roman Catholicism and from there brought over into Protestantism and even a part of it brought over into some Baptist churches. This book called **The Two Babylons** documents all of this. This is one of the most important books today concerning the church of the last days, the church that the Antichrist is going to head up, for we are beginning to see things taking place right now. **The Two Babylons** or the Papal worship proves to be the worship of Nimrod and his wife.

We want to begin reading with verse 20 of this second chapter because we’re going to talk about women in the Bible. First, we’re going to talk about Jezebel because that is what is under discussion here. In verse 20 it says, *“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into*

great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”

Here’s a woman by the name of Jezebel that was really causing all kinds of difficulties and problems within this church in Thyatira. I want to talk about women in the Bible today because the Bible does have much to say about women. I don’t know if you realize it or not, but the Bible has had more to do with the elevation of the woman from being a slave than anything else in the world. You look at all the other religions of the world. You look at all the other countries of the world, and you will find that where the Bible is respected, where the Bible is revered, where the Bible is influencing that country, you find that the woman is given a place of honor rather than a place of slavery. Recently we have been reading about the revolution in the country of Iran and that this Mohammedan priest Ayatollah Khomeini has said that they are going to restore a Mohammedan country that is going to be governed by the laws of Mohammedanism. You remember that many of the women were rebelling against it because it puts the woman in the place of a slave. She cannot even allow her face to be seen. She must wear a veil over her face always. She has no choice in anything. She is really a slave of her master called her husband. But where the Bible has been influential, the Bible has raised women from the status of slaves to a position of equality before God.

This so-called ERA amendment [Equal Rights Amendment] is going to do the very reverse

(See **CHURCH** on page 12)

THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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Remember America's Declaration of Independence

By Carlton Elkins, Missionary in Japan

*[The following two articles are taken from the **Tokyo Weekender**, published in Tokyo, Japan. They were sent to us by Missionary Carlton Elkins who has been a subscriber to **The Baptist Challenge** for many years.]*

The words, "In Congress, July 4, 1776, the unanimous Declaration of the thirteen United States of America," introduce the Declaration of Independence. The break with Great Britain proved to be a blessing both to America and to the British. Indeed, to the entire world. It was the first big step toward the dream of a land where the government would govern by the consent of the governed. Today, we need to remember the Declaration of Independence and the events of those times.

Recently, we powerfully and poignantly remembered D-Day, the first step toward allied victory in World War II. We heard such words as "We must remember." And, "We must never forget." Yes, we understand. Likewise, we must remember the Declaration of Independence and the War of Independence that followed.

Today, there are those in government who do not feel they should be answerable to the governed. The "politically correct" crowd does not believe others should have any voice in the debates on social and political issues. Others cite "separation of church and state" as reason for a call for a "religion-free" public. If we do not remember our roots, our selfishness, our self-centered motives and "isms" that are contrary to our early purposes, will scuttle the

American ship of state, this small nation that has offered more hope and more opportunities for more people than any other nation in the history of mankind. If we lose this, we may be sure we will never get it back again. We must remember July 4, 1776.

From the earliest times, people have felt very keenly the injustice of men who, simply because they had the power, deprived others of property, freedom and life, beside inflicting terrible cruelties. The Declaration of Independence addressed such despotic conduct and stated a belief in a better way. It has proved to be a much better way.

The citizens of the American colonies were not all for independence, but they did have a sense of divine justice. Thomas Jefferson, who penned the words, referred to God four times in the declaration. God was the fulcrum upon which they plied for leverage against tyranny. He uses the words, "Nature's God," "Creator," "Supreme Judge of the world" and "divine Providence." Although Jefferson was a deist, he wrote for all Americans.

It was the Declaration of the entire Congress and was unanimously approved by this body which was almost entirely composed of Christians. It was the American Declaration. It states our equality — made equal by a common Creator. There is such a thing as real justice because there is the Supreme Judge of the world, before whom judges and potentates shall stand. The term "divine Providence" expresses the faith that God works in human events. These beliefs were the fabric,

the warp and woof of which those people were made, who signed the Declaration of Independence.

Today there are powerful movements out to remove the foundation from America. They do not believe in God, and they think they can have the good things that America has known without God who made us great. They do not believe that any nation has the right to exist as a God-fearing nation, even though history shows clearly how much good this group of people has done for so many.

In 1776, the "American dream" was not a chicken in every pot and a horse in every stable, but the opportunity for Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. It also included the belief that America would continue as it had started, with God as her Captain — not a Congregational nation or a Catholic Church nation, or an Episcopalian nation — but certainly as a Christian nation. Clearly that was their expectation.

Today, the "American dream" has been reduced to material greed. Along with this degradation has been the degradation of morality, disregard for others' property and life, the loss of meaning of love and life itself. This is why we must remember July 4, 1776.

(Carlton Elkins is an "independent Baptist missionary" and long-time Japan resident. Please read "This Week at Weekender" on Page 4 for commentary.)

This Week At Weekender

You might find interesting Carlton Elkins' advice on remember America's Indepen-

dence Day on Page 6 of this special tribute to Uncle Sam. As noted, Elkins-san is a Baptist missionary, residing out in Hachioji; he's also a frequent contributor to our (and others') letters section. In light of the surging political influence in the U.S. of the so-called "radical religious right," primarily in the Republican Party, I read Elkins' comments that America was basically formed as a "Christian nation."

I queried him by fax asking, "Where does that leave our Jewish brothers? Muslim? Buddhist?" In my view, America's Founding Fathers based their Declaration on **faith in God**, but not necessarily a fundamentalist Christian premise, per se. Mr. Elkins responded:

"I said that America is, or at least started out to be, a Christian nation. Your question is where does that leave American Jews, Muslims and Buddhists? I would say, in **the best place possible**. As long as American Christianity is Bible Christianity and not mere sectarian Christianity, it provides the best of all possible opportunities for all.

First, America is one of the very few places in the world where there is no state religion. In a state religion, everyone's taxes help pay the expenses of that religion. That religion also enjoys a special position. Second, there is no coercion one way or another. The Bible position is that everyone must be convinced in his/her own mind.

"Third, the freedom of choice being such as it is,

(See **JAPAN** on page 16)

What Is New Evangelicalism

By Bruce Oyen, Pastor
Fellowship Baptist Church, Miles City, MT

What is New Evangelicalism? While discussing the subject with friends I soon realized that there were two different definitions of the term, one of which was not truly in accord with the original definition.

So ... what is New Evangelicalism? Some believe that it is a mixture of orthodoxy and liberalism and neo-orthodoxy, when one accepts some doctrines of the Word but rejects others, such as affirming the deity of Christ while denying the verbal inspiration of Scripture.

Others believe that New Evangelicalism is a theology which confesses orthodox Christian doctrine but which allows ecclesiastical ties with those who do not.

So ... what is New Evangelicalism? Which definition is the most correct? The best way to answer this question is to let the father of it define and describe it for us. I refer, of course, to Harold J. Ockenga.

Ockenga's definition/description is taken from his Foreword to Harold Lindsell's important book, **The Battle For The Bible**, which is published by Zondervan Publishing House.

Ockenga said, "Neo-evangelicalism was born in 1948 in connection with a convocation address which I gave in the Civic Auditorium in Pasadena. While reaffirming the theological view of fundamentalism, this address repudiated its ecclesiology and its social theory. The ringing call for a repudiation of separatism and the summons to social involvement received a hearty response from many evangelicals. The name caught on and spokesmen such

as Drs. Harold Lindsell, Carl F. Henry, Edward Carnell, and Gleason Archer supported this viewpoint. We had no intention of launching a movement, but found that the emphasis attracted widespread support and exercised great influence. Neo-evangelicalism differed from modernism in its acceptance of the supernatural and its emphasis on the fundamental doctrines of Scripture. It differed from neo-orthodoxy in its emphasis upon the written Word as inerrant, over against the Word of God which was above and different from Scripture, but was manifested in Scripture. It differed from fundamentalism in its repudiation of separatism and its determination to engage itself in the theological dialogue of the day. It had a new emphasis upon the application of the gospel to the sociological, political, and economic areas of life.

"Neo-evangelicals emphasized the restatement of Christian theology in accordance with the needs of the times, the re-engagement in the theological debate, the recapture of denominational leadership, and the reexamination of theological problems such as the antiquity of man, the universality of the Flood, God's method of creation, and others.

"Because no individual carried the banner for the new evangelicalism and no one developed a theology or a definitive position, many younger evangelicals joined the movement and claimed the name, but did not confess the doctrinal position of orthodoxy. This brought neo-evangelicalism into criticism and often, both unwisely and unfairly, transferred

these criticisms to the original leaders of the movement."

With Ockenga's own words at your fingertips read again where he said neo-evangelicalism differed from modernism, neo-orthodoxy and *fundamentalism*. Three times in a few words Ockenga pointed out that new-evangelicalism repudiated fundamentalism's separatism.

So ... what is my point? Since new-evangelicalism isn't modernism, neo-orthodoxy or fundamentalism, it is far more common among Christians than many realize. In fact, it is the majority report among those who profess allegiance to the fundamental doctrines of Scripture for the simple reason that the majority do not practice the Biblical doctrine of separation from modernism and neo-orthodoxy and Catholicism and other non-Christian faiths.

Do you know that the Gideons International is a new-evangelical organization, according to Ockenga's definition? About the only "Christian" denomination left out of the Gideons is Catholicism.

Do you know that the *Promise Keepers* conferences are new evangelical? The September, 1994 issue of **Moody** magazine has an article about *Promise Keepers* on page 72. Paragraph two of this article reads, "Founded by University of Colorado football coach Bill McCartney, the ministry aims to 'ignite a nationwide movement calling men from all denominational, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds to reconciliation, discipleship, and godliness.'"

Do you know that **Chuck Swindoll** was a featured speaker at a *Promise Keepers* convention, according to the August 29, 1994 *Newsweek* magazine? The article is on pages 60 and 61. Consider these quotes: "A Christian rock band set the mood." " 'We're scoring baskets for Jesus,' declared emcee

Bob Horner, an official with Campus Crusade for Christ. Then, as the band broke out with 'Born To Be Wild,' evangelist Chuck Swindoll roared on to the platform astride a motorcycle to deliver a sermon on avoiding temptation."

Isn't it logical to conclude that if Swindoll speaks at a new evangelical convention, at which the emcee is an official for a new evangelical organization, he must be a new evangelical too? It seems obvious that he was not there to point out the errors of new evangelicalism.

Do you know that **Billy Graham** is a new evangelical? The September, 1994 *Decision* magazine, one of his publications, has an article called, Northeastern Ohio: READY FOR THE GOSPEL. The first paragraph reads, "What happens when 1,340 Protestant churches from 77 denominations and 152 Roman Catholic parishes work together to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to the people?"

Those who know how Catholicism contradicts Scripture in most of its doctrines, and learns that Graham works with Catholic churches in so-called evangelism, should easily realize that he is, indeed, a new evangelical of the most radical kind.

Well, what does happen when these denominations work together in "evangelism?" They give a false gospel to an ignorant public!

I have given these examples of New Evangelicalism to make us aware of the fact that it is far more common than we think for the simple reason that New Evangelicalism, according to the father of the term, Harold J. Ockenga, is a theology which professes to hold to orthodox Christianity, but which has repudiated separation from

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(See **JAPAN** on page 16)

CHURCH...

(Continued from page 1)

ship roll of a local assembly. In this passage it says "the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty" then we go on and read about the great Pentecostal revival and in Acts 2:41 the Holy Spirit says, "the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." So the membership was growing! First there were "about an hundred and twenty;" then, "there were added unto them (and the "them" can only refer to the first group mentioned) about three thousand souls" and then we go on over to Acts 4:4 and read that as the revival progressed "many of them which heard the Word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand!" So the membership was growing from one hundred and twenty to three thousand and on to five thousand!

In 1 Corinthians 5:13 we have some standards of discipline laid down. It says "But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." The "them that are without" has nothing to do with unsaved people — but refers to sinning believers who are not members of the local assembly — and therefore the assembly has no jurisdiction or power over them — but the Apostle very clearly tells the church at Corinth to "put away" a "wicked person." What could they be "put away" from if they weren't part of? It clearly shows church membership and church discipline over it's members.

In Acts 9:26 we are told that the converted Saul of Tarsus "assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple." So here is the record of Paul seeking membership in a local church.

Look at Acts 6:2-5 where it is commonly believed we have the first election of men to the office of deacon. How could one "vote" or choose unless those that made the choice were part of a recognized membership and how could one be chosen unless he was part of that same membership?

In 1 Timothy 5:9 where instructions were given as to the doling out of material help to members of a church we are told that we should "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old." This certainly does not bar a widow from church membership — but it does prove that the early churches kept records as to who was and who was not a member — also what their ages were, etc. How important is the local assembly!! How we need to safeguard it's existence and show loyalty to it in every way.

The Beginning of the Local Assembly

Just when did this "church of Jesus Christ" start? When did local assemblies come into being? Where and when was the first one from which others came?

Those who would identify themselves as members of true churches must be sure to let it be known that they are not "Protestants!"

My little girl sometimes gets into hot water with playmates and even relatives when she stoutly maintains that we are not Protestants but Baptists — and there is a great gulf between these distinctions.

True churches do not date their existence back to the Reformation. We must go way back beyond that if we are going to have the church that Jesus built. Protestantism, with it's invention of an "invisible and universal" church cannot prove the existence of any of

it's local and particular denominations before the Reformation so they go back to Pentecost and speak of "the beginning of the church." None has ever come up with one clear, plain statement from the Word of God about the church beginning at Pentecost. This strange teaching is a mixture of tradition and outright rejection of the clear Scriptural position of a local church as the only church now in existence.

Go back to the text that we began this study with and then jump over to Matthew 18:15-17. Look carefully at these two passages and ponder them well. In Matthew 16 the Lord made the great promise and announcement that He would build *His* church, then in Matthew 18 He speaks of the order in that church and clearly speaks as though the church He was to build had been built and was already in existence. Nothing could be plainer. The church began somewhere between Matthew 16 and Matthew 18. It has been, as an institution, in existence from the days of the ministry of Jesus.

The Bible speaks of three great buildings of God. There was the Tabernacle and the Temple and there is the Church. God used the same order with each of these buildings. He built them — and then He occupied them. That is the true meaning of Pentecost. The church was built during the ministry of Jesus and on the Day of Pentecost it was truly occupied as the Holy Spirit came to empower it and give it the ability to carry out the commission that had been presented to it in Matthew 28:19-20. Incidentally, we might mention that the Great Commission is a Church Commission — but it couldn't possibly be a Church Commission if the church had not begun until Pentecost. How could one commission something that was not yet in existence?

The church began as an in-

stitution during His earthly ministry. He founded a local assembly and from it have come many others for which we thank God. To be a true local assembly like the one He started we ought to be producing others as we go along.

The Continuance of the Local Assembly

Christ built a local assembly while He was here on earth. Any church that claims to be *His* must be able to trace itself back to *Him*.

It can best do this not by appealing to history — but by appealing to the Word of God. In other words — the proof of being Christ's church does not rest upon a conformity to the cold dates in history books — but rather on a fidelity to the teachings of the Word of God.

We can best identify a church as Christ's church if it follows the same pattern that His churches have followed down through the pages of Scripture. The Word of God makes it plain, first of all, that a true church should be *composed of believers*.

In Acts 2:41 we read, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." You will note that the baptism depended upon their receiving the Word. In other words, they were baptized only because they had received the Word. They had given testimony to and evidence of the saving grace of God in their lives.

In Acts 2:47 we read, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." The scholars tell us that it can also be rendered "such as were being saved." Here it is clear

(See AUGER on page 7)

CHURCH...

(Continued from page 6)

that they were saved *first* — then they were added to the church. In other words — being saved added them to the Lord — but, back to verse 41 — being baptized added them to the church. Only those who were being saved were also being added to the church. There was a requirement of regeneration; there was an insistence on testimony; there was a rigid regulation of salvation before membership.

So it is a mark of a true church that it is composed of believers. Secondly, a true church should be *composed of baptized believers*.

Matthew 28:19-20 contains the great commission as a commission to the true church of Christ. You will note that baptism is inserted in the right place — it follows conversion and goes before entering into the teaching ministry of the church. When one became a believer it was the norm, the thing to do, to follow the Lord into the church by being baptized into it.

In Acts 8:38-37 we have the record of the baptizing of the Ethiopian eunuch and we note that the Scriptural baptism was belief. "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest be baptized" was the way that Philip put it.

In Acts 9:18 we are told that after Paul believed he "arose, and was baptized." In Acts 16 we have the record of the conversion and baptism of the Phillippian jailer and his family. Out of them and other believers there was formed the church — that became a recipient of one of the New Testament epistles.

It is plain and clear that a true church to be what it claims to be must have as its members those who have been saved;

and those who have, on proper authority and after a proper method and mode, been baptized. Then, it is also apparent that a true church is *composed of baptized believers breaking bread*.

Acts 2:42 and 46 show us that once they had entered the membership of the church they broke bread with that church. We do not believe in "sacraments" but we do believe in ordinances. We believe that by divine authority there were certain things instituted for the churches of Christ. One of these was baptism and the other was the Lord's Supper or Communion or the Breaking of Bread. Communion was given, as baptism was given, as an ordinance of the local assembly. It is to be performed on the authority of the church, for the church. No one Scripturally "breaks bread" by having a meeting of a select few in their own living room or by visiting various "churches" or "assemblies" or "meetings" and "remembering the Lord" with just any other Christians. The true keeping of the ordinance depends on membership in a local assembly and gathering with that assembly in a time of heart searching and remembrance.

Then, a true church is *composed of baptized believers breaking bread and propagating the gospel*.

Many times we have groups who zealously fight for their excuse for existing and they give us many strong arguments along one line or another. To be a true church and to justify existence as such, an assembly of believers should be throwing out the *life line*.

How we need to pay heed to the great commission. How we need to get out to all the world with the gospel.

How we need the fires of evangelism as well as the techniques of the classroom. How we need the warmth of Chris-

tian testimony as well as the wealth of Christian theology. How we need to be Baptist, not alone in our doctrine but in our practice as well.

Without the local churches today the whole work of God would be in jeopardy. Without the local churches the cause of missions would almost be lost and without the local churches there would be little real, lasting, enduring gospel testimony left.

We have a vast number of people who glibly flit from Conference auditorium to Conference auditorium and who visit around "wherever they can be fed." A group of professing believers with no ties and no roots who back up and support all the renegade movements that follow in the wake of real Christianity in the same way that the cow birds follow the herd has come into existence. They do not "belong" to a church but to what they designate as "The True Church." They love to be "fed" and "entertained" and "charmed" and "excited" but they want nothing of the down to earth business of working and sacrificing to establish real New Testament churches. Little do they realize that if it were not for the true churches in the first place they most likely never would have heard the gospel and the things they feed upon are only kept alive at all because of the influence of the real churches of Jesus Christ. Thousands of folks are saved through the ministries of the local churches — saved in their services, through their radio programs, through the literature they distribute and the servants they send out and support in the work — and yet never become members of true local churches. Without the ministry of what they never become part of they would probably never have heard the gospel in the first

NEO...

(Continued from page 4)

those who profess unorthodox theologies, such as Catholicism, modernism and neo-orthodoxy.

So ... what should pastors do about it? First, they should teach their congregations what it is: a repudiation of the Biblical principle of separation from false doctrine and its teachers. Second, they should teach their congregations what is wrong with it: it is disobedience to the Word of God, and it gives the impression that Bible doctrine is not very important. Third, they should give current examples of it to their congregations to make sure they know how it works and who endorses it. Fourth, they should keep their congregations from involvement in New Evangelical ministries, such as the Gideons, Promise Keepers, and the Billy Graham crusades. Fifth, they should keep themselves out of ecumenical and new evangelical ministerial associations. Sixth, they should remember that their commitment to God's Word is to be stronger than their personal friendships with those who want to be soft on the issue.

In conclusion, consider these important words from Albert James Dager's book, **Vengeance Is Ours**, as quoted in the September/October, 1994 issue of *The BDM Letter*, published by Biblical Discernment Ministries, P. O. Box 6154, Bloomington, IN 47407-6154, Rick Miesel, Editor.

"While I don't wish to label everyone who has contact with (Neo-evangelicals or psychologizers) a fellow traveler, it's obvious that those who are asked to teach on the same platform would share similar views. Otherwise their appearing together would be billed as a 'debate' or a 'dialogue.' And

(See AUGER on page 16)

(See NEO on page 10)

AT&T, MCI, SPRINT, or

LIFELINE? Don Wildmon's 8/94 *AFA Journal* says: "If you are an AT&T customer, you are helping to promote homosexuality in America." The 10/3 *Christianity Today* agrees that AT&T gives money to homosexual-rights groups and sponsors immoral TV programs, but says MCI and Sprint support abortion-rights organizations and provide 900 numbers for the "phone sex" industry. Wildmon is pushing Lifeline Long Distance Service which gives "10% of your long distance billing" to his American Family Association. His *AFA Journal* is a good source for being informed on moral issues, but he is a United Methodist (NCC/WCC member) minister who has welcomed Catholic and liberal-denom leaders into his ecumenical AFA, and has praised them as "Christian leaders." — CC [Editor's Note: As our readers know, *The Baptist Challenge* has also made arrangements with Lifeline Long Distance Service to give 10% of your long distance bill when you join Lifeline for your long distance service and request that *The Baptist Challenge* be the recipient of the 10% which they will donate to a non-profit institution. Please read the ad in this issue of *TBC*. I have already begun using Lifeline, and their rates are not based on mileage. It costs the same amount of money if you call Alaska, Puerto Rico or in the next state — 13¢ per minute in day time and 12.9¢ at night. That rate applies to all of your out-of-state calls and some

of your in-state calls. We have received mail already from some of our readers who have already switched including one business. If you wish to switch, and we hope you will, you can call 1(800)800-7550. Be sure and tell them that you want your contribution to go to **The Baptist Challenge**.]

Jonah And The Whale.

Although Jesus Christ accepted the historicity of Jonah (Mt. 12:40-42; Lk. 11:29-32), the Dr. Carroll E. Simcox writes in the September, 1994 *Christian Challenge* that the book of Jonah "was evidently written as a satirical parable directed against prophets who proclaimed narrowly nationalistic doctrines and said of them 'Thus saith the Lord.' Since it is a parable, we need not waste any mental sweat upon such questions as whether a man could live for three days in the belly of a big fish."

Arkansas State Convention Guidelines.

In the September 22, 1994, (Pg. 8) issue of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, churches of the State Convention are advised that their messengers must have proper credentials in order to meet the eligibility requirements for voting. Among the requirements is that they be a member of a "regular Baptist church which is in sympathy with the principles and purposes of this Convention ..." Following this is a definition of

a "regular Baptist church." The article states: "Regular Baptist churches are those Baptist churches which in doctrine and in practice adhere to the principles and spirit of The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the 1963 sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention and The Baptist Faith and Message *shall not be interpreted as to permit open communion and/or alien immersion.*" I applaud the Convention's position on open communion and alien immersion, but this part of the constitution of the Convention is not enforced. There are churches in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention that practice open communion and receive alien immersion, yet they are represented in all of the Convention activities. One would expect them to follow the rules of their own constitution.

ACLU, Where Are You?

It can be dangerous for churches to become entangled in politics. But if it is wrong for conservatives, it should be equally wrong for liberals. Church-state watchdogs such as the American Civil Liberties Union (a misnomer) can look the other way when Pres. Clinton pushes his liberal politics from a church pulpit. A most recent case in point was when he delivered a 15-minute sermon promoting his bad crime bill from the pulpit of the Full Gospel AME Zion Church in Maryland. He noted his role as a government official is a ministry of God, and asked them to pray for Congress and "ask us not to turn away from our minis-

try" (8/27 World). Dr. Hugh Pyle asks (9/23 Sword): "Where is the ACLU when Pres. Clinton goes into black pulpits to preach his politics of liberalism? Does the government revoke the tax exempt status of such churches?" —CC

John Todd Goes Back To Witchcraft.

In the late 1970s John Todd deceived some fundamentalists and evangelicals with his sensational claims of being a former witch, Illuminati member, etc.. The 9/12 *Christian News* reports that Todd today is serving a 300-year prison sentence for rape in Columbia, SC. It says Todd is divorced, and today disavows all Christianity. He has realigned with Wicca, a school of witchcraft and magic, and is a Wiccan spokesman in the prison. Jack Chick, with his comic books, promoted Todd, and Chick publications still stands behind its comic books. —CC

Proctor & Gamble Rumor.

The 9/94 *Christian World Report* says Proctor & Gamble is again victimized by a false rumor that its president appeared on Phil Donahue's show March 1 saying he is linked with the Church of Satan. This rumor surfaces each year for the past several years. It is always dated March 1, current year, with a list of P&G products to boycott. P&G appears innocent on this score, but the 9/94 *AFA Journal* says P&G is the leading advertiser on pro-homosexual TV programs. —CC

Utah Judge Bars Mom From Moving.

Following her divorce, Alicia Larson of Park City, UT, had planned to take her children and start a new life in Oregon. Her plans, however, have been changed by Third District Judge David Young who fears that Larson will not raise her family in a proper Mormon environment. Young signed an order in April of 1993 that prevents Larson from taking her children out of state — or even out of the county. Ten years ago, Larson joined the LDS church after marrying Marc Larson in Colorado. After moving to Park City their marriage began to have difficulties, many of which, she said, involved religion. In April of 1992 there was an amicable divorce with the couple agreeing on joint custody of their three daughters who now are ages 6, 8, and 10. In the divorce settlement, Larson stated that she successfully objected to her ex-husband inserting a provision concerning the children's religious upbringing. The issue only came up when Larson announced her plans to move....Alicia Larson was devastated by the ruling. "I got the feeling Judge Young would have found a way to keep me here, period," she said. "... he looked over the top of his glasses and glared at me and said, 'She has no commitment to the church.'" In Utah or in any other Mormon context when the phrase "the church" is used it refers directly to the LDS church for in Mormonism there can be no other. Larson reports that it was like she was a little girl and the judge was lecturing her. Now she has had to sell her house to help pay legal bills approaching \$20,000. — The Evangel

Boycott of Kmart Effective.

American Family Association says that its boycott of Kmart continues to cause the company economic woes. Kmart Friday reported that it expects to post its seventh consecutive quarterly profit decline in the fiscal third quarter ending Oct. 26. While Kmart continues to blame the weather for their decline, AFA says that much of the company's economic woes can be attributed to the 3-year boycott pushed by AFA. AFA says Kmart is one of the largest retailers of pornography in America. "It is amazing that in reporting on the decline of Kmart for the past two years, the news media has never even mentioned the boycott," said Donald E. Wildmon, president of AFA. Wildmon said the boycott began in the spring of 1990 when Waldenbooks, which is owned by Kmart, sued AFA. Waldenbooks sued the AFA because of AFA's efforts against pornography. Kmart's economic troubles began a few months after the AFA boycott began. "We called for a boycott of Kmart because all the profits from Waldenbooks porn sales go to Kmart and because Kmart refused to take the porn out of their bookstores," Wildmon said. He said that AFA has distributed over 20,000,000 "Boycott Kmart" cards, mailed approximately three million boycott packets, promoted the boycott through 160,000 churches and over several hundred Christian radio stations. "If a similar boycott promoted by the homosexuals had been anywhere near as successful as this one, it would have been reported in the secular media with big fanfare," Wildmon said.

Falwell Gets Cozy With Rev. Moon At Washington Event.

The Rev. Sun Myung Moon's ongoing efforts to cement ties with the Religious Right received a boost recently when the Rev. Jerry Falwell appeared at a Unification Church-sponsored event in Washington, D.C. The August edition of *Unification News* reported that Falwell spoke July 26 at the inaugural meeting of the Youth Federation for World Peace, a Moon front group for young people. Falwell is featured in a front-page photo along with Moon and his wife and a group of public figures, including former Secretary of State Alexander Haig, Ronald Reagan's daughter Maureen, former Washington, D.C. congressional delegate Walter Fauntroy and Princess Eva Maria of Yugoslavia. The Youth Federation event was not the first time Falwell has shared a stage with Moon. In 1985 the Lynchburg evangelist joined a group of religious leaders at a Washington news conference dubbed a "welcome home" party for Moon, who had just been released from prison after serving 13 months for evading federal income taxes. Falwell, who since has had tax problems of his own, suggested that President Ronald Reagan issue a pardon to clear Moon's name. "I think the president should pardon Rev. Moon," Falwell said. "I think he was the victim of a railroad job, and I think we all in the religious community are losers because of it." (Reagan declined Falwell's advice.) Moon claims to be the messiah sent to complete the failed mission of Jesus Christ. Such theology is sharply at

odds with the fundamentalist Protestantism professed by Falwell. — Church & State, October 1994.

* * *

Court Declines To Review Church-State Disputes.

Religious liberty disputes over a Florida city's efforts to regulate charitable solicitation and Puerto Rico's requirement that religious schools be licensed were among more than 800 cases rejected Oct. 3 by the U.S. Supreme Court. The high court issued the orders as it opened its 1994-95 term. The Supreme Court left standing a ruling by the Puerto Rico Supreme Court upholding a law that requires all preschools, elementary and secondary schools to be licensed by the Puerto Rico Education Department. Puerto Rico's top court said the requirements are strictly secular and designed to assure educational quality.

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FELLOWSHIPS

and

CONFERENCES
CINCINNATI, OH

November 8-10, 1994, Central Baptist Church, 7645 Winton Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45224, James W. Love, Pastor

AMARILLO, TX

November 9-11, 1994, Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, 1600 N. Bivins St., Amarillo, TX 79107, Ron Pollan, Pastor.

LAMBERT, MS

December 7-11, 1994, Calvary Baptist Church, P. O. Box 209, Lambert, MS 38643, M. L. Ellis, Pastor.

ALEXANDRIA, KY

December 30-31, 1994, First Baptist Church, 104 Washington St., Alexandria, KY 41001, Carl Morton, Pastor.

HUMBLE, TX

January 12-13, 1995, Northway Baptist Church, 5939 Bender Rd., Humble, TX 77396, David Stone, Pastor

WESTCLIFFE, CO

January 24-27, 1995, "Retreat In the Rockies", Wetmore Baptist Church, P. O. Box 84, Wetmore, CO 81253, (719) 284-4197, Brian Withrow, Pastor.

PINCKNEYVILLE, IL

March 14-16, 1995, Holt's Prairie Baptist Church, Rt. 4, Box 163, Pinckneyville, IL 62274, Mark Cox, Pastor

LUDLOW, KY

March 27-30, 1995, Bethlehem Baptist Temple, 316 Adela Ave., Ludlow, KY 41016, Bill Miller, Pastor.

BIG SPRING, TX

April 4-6, 1995, Birdwell Lane Baptist Church, 1512 Birdwell Ln., Big Spring, TX 79720, Lewis McGarity, Pastor.

We shall be happy to list the dates of fellowship meetings of independent Baptist churches throughout the country. Please send the dates far enough in advance.

NEO...

(Continued from page 7)

while they may not agree on every issue, there must be sufficient agreement in order to be supportive of one another. So those who are supportive of (neo-evangelicals or psychologizers) and/or hold to important (neo-evangelical or psychological) philosophy are well known among their peers.

"To seek unity with them without challenging their error leaves one's own beliefs open to question. Those who defend heretics, even if they do not believe in their teachings, are guilty of lending credibility to their heresies, and will be held accountable to God for the souls that are destroyed as a result. It's up to those who know the truth to defend the Church against false teachers whatever the cost to unity or to personal

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Birth A Church, Not Bury One

By Berniece Gardner

Yesterday, I went to a funeral. Victory Church in Kanab, Utah, was laid to rest.

The services were conducted by a lawyer from St. George, Utah. There was no music, no Scripture, no sermon, no mourners.

After the opening prayer, the lawyer explained certain legal requirements must be met to dissolve the legal entity that was Victory Church.

A motion was made to declare Victory Church disbanded and to elect the chairman of trustees legal representative to sign all papers for the disbandment of the church. A second came very quickly. The seven members of the church voted. Six were in favor, one abstained.

A motion was made for the disposal of assets. The building was to be sold. The buyer was one of the visitors. The motion was seconded. All in favor? Unanimous. No dissension.

A motion to adjourn. All in favor, rise. Amen.

Victory Church no longer exists.

What does it mean to dissolve? Is the church put in a test tube and covered with sulfuric acid? Has the church been through such a bad time that it is destroyed?

Disbanded. The cord that binds church members together is gone. No one is a part of that "group."

As I sat at this funeral, I remembered the birth of this church. It was a joyous occasion. Dedicated Christian men and women started this church. They gave sacrificially of themselves, their time, and their money. Utah-Idaho Southern Baptists had a part in this church. Friends from across

the South gave to the building.

When a Christian dies, there is the certainty of resurrection. There is no hope of life after death for Victory Church. Is there a witness that will live? Did this church die in vain?

I do not know the answer. I only know that a funeral for a church is a very sad event. My heart is crying. I am in mourning.

I much prefer a birthing.

— Baptist Record

The Unequal Yoke A Book Review

The Unequal Yoke spoken of in the title concerns the linking of fundamentalism and liberalism. It deals with the subtle way that liberalism has of inserting just a bit of doubt to the teachings of the Bible.

The story is presented as if the author were the soul of a dollar. He comes into possession of a widow who donates him to the church and he eventually is owned by a young ministerial student planning to be a missionary. He gives up his identity with the dollar when the student buys a liberal book and transmigrates to the book.

Subjects such as liberal views on the Bible, the person and work of Christ, separation and evolution are all discussed and refuted. It presents the liberal view of ecumenicalism for what it really is and liberal religious universities for what they are and what harm they can do.

Parents and students alike should read this powerhouse of information on "*come out and be ye separate.*"

Order from the Challenge Press, \$4.00 postage paid.

Email Address:

mlmoser@earthlink.net

Church Bulletin Bleeps, Bloops and Blunders

Over the years, church bulletins have been a great source of amusement for congregations due to bloopers, blunders and misplaced modifiers.

Most of the accidental slips wouldn't be as funny if they were made in another setting. However with the Biblical adage of trying to be perfect as the Lord is perfect, goofs in church seem goofier.

Richard Lederer put together some of his favorite slips in the book *Anguished English*. here are some of his favorites.

The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind, and they can be seen in the basement Friday afternoon.

This afternoon there will be a meeting in the south and north end at the church. Children will

baptized at both ends.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

22 members were present at the church meeting held at the home of Mrs. Marshal Crutchfield last evening. Mrs. Crutchfield and Mrs. Ranking sang a duet, "The Lord Knows Why."

During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J. F. Stubbs supplied our pulpit.

Wednesday the Ladies Literary Society will meet. Mrs. Clark will sing, "Put Me In My Little Bed," accompanied by the pastor.

Thursday at 5 p.m. there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All wishing to become little mothers will please meet with the pastor in his study.

Today's sermon: "How Much Can You Drink?" with hymns from a full choir.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.

A songfest was held at the Methodist Church Wednesday.

Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement on Friday at 7 p.m. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Potluck supper, prayer and medication to follow.

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. White to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

The concert held in the fellowship hall was a great success. Special thanks are due to the minister's daughter, who labored the whole evening at the piano, which as usual fell upon her.

Don't let worry kill you off — let the church help.

On Sunday a special collection will be taken to defray the expense of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the carpet will please come forward to get a piece of paper.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter are to be married on Oct. 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in school days.

Due to the rector's illness, Wednesday's healing services will be discontinued until further notice.

The service will close with "Little Drops of Water." One of the men will start quietly and the rest of the congregation will join in.

— Baptist Trumpet

Christians Are On The Defense Not the Offense

The chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Congressman Vic Fazio of California, has stated that Republicans are being taken over by a radical and intolerant fringe group of dangerous religious people. His statements have prompted a rebuttal by Paul Weyrich, head of the Free Congress Foundation. The rebuttal, appearing in EP News Service, noted,

"It is another attempt by liberals to picture religious people as on the offensive, where as in reality religious people are on the defensive.

"Why are Christian activists turning out in record numbers to help defeat liberals at the ballot box?

"It is the Clinton Administration, barely in office of 24 hours, which initiated the gags in the military policy.

"It is the Clinton Administration which has sought to expand abortion rights even to the point of making such so-called rights the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy.

"It is the Clinton Administration which sought to so narrow the definition of child pornography that prosecutions would be all but impossible.

"It is the Clinton Administration which seeks to recover monies tithed to a Minnesota church a year before the couple who made the contribution declared bankruptcy, on the grounds that giving money to a church has no value to the people who contribute.

"It is the Clinton Administration which seeks to ban any religious symbols by any housing providers in public advertisements on the grounds that such ads might discriminate

(See DEFENSE on page 16)

The Pastor

Edited By M. L. Moser

The nature and duties of the pastoral office form a subject of great importance. The duties of the pastor have become so great that a pastor often finds himself unable to do all that is expected of him by his congregation. To better accomplish his duties and do them more efficiently, he must be fully aware of his duties and the more aware he is of them, the better he will be able to accomplish them. This book will help him.

Chapters include: The Divine Call to the Ministry; The Choice and Change of the Pastor's Field; The Pastor and Public Worship; The Administration of the Ordinances; The Pastor's Attitude Toward Missions; The Pastor and Revival; Cultivation of Social Life In A Church; The Pastor As An Organizer; The Pastor and Funeral Services; Marriage and Divorce; Cultivation of the Missionary Spirit; Extension of the Pastor's Pulpit; The Pastor and Interdenominationalism; Ministers Not In the Pastoral Office; Pastoral Study; Pastoral Responsibility; The Pastor's Outer Life; The Pastor's Inner Life.

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CHURCH...

(Continued from page 2)

of what it claims to do. The ERA amendment is contrary to the Bible and it would take away the honored place that women have in the Bible, the Word of God. We will cover that in just a few minutes as we look at the Bible and women.

First I want you to notice what the Bible has to say about authority. I want to note that authority, according to the Word of God, is all in God Himself. God is sovereign, and God has *all* authority. In Daniel 4:34 we read, "*And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*" (Dan. 4:34-35).

Now we find that very same teaching in what we commonly think of as The Great Commission. In the 28th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew we read beginning in verse 18, "*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*" The word "power" is the word for authority. God is sovereign. He has all authority. He has all power. He is able to do what He wants to do because He is sovereign.

Now having all power, and being able to do with it what He chooses to do, He can designate or delegate that power if He desires to do so, and we do

find that He has done that. In the 28th chapter of Matthew, we see that He has delegated the power or the authority for the preaching of the gospel, the baptizing of the saved, and the teaching of the Word of God to His New Testament churches. They are the only ones that have that authority or that power because God placed it there, and He has the right to do that. He has that authority.

We have governments upon our earth today. Governments, such as a democracy, a republic, a monarchy, or whatever it might be, but I want you to turn to the 13th chapter of the Book of Romans. We find that God has placed part of this authority on earth, and He has given men the right of government, the authority of government. Notice beginning in verse one, and we will read through verse 7.

"*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God.*" Now that word power is the same word we found in Matthew 28 which means authority. "*For there is no power but of God: the powers,*" (that's government), "*that be are ordained of God.*" God is the author of human government. He has granted to them the right to govern. Their power has derived from God Himself. Go on to verse 2 now. "*Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*" All of these that are resisting the authority of the government are resisting the authority of God to grant government that right and that power.

Verse 3, "*For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the*

sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also." Tribute means taxes. "*For they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour*" (Rom. 13:1-7).

In these verses, we see that government is ordained of God and that we are to abide by the laws of our country. He tells us we are to pay our taxes, and He says that if we abide by the laws, then we have nothing to fear at all, but He says, "*If thou do that which is evil, be afraid.*" If you break the laws, be afraid.

I want you to notice something else in this same verse. Not only do we find the authority for government, but we have the authority here for Capital Punishment. Now this week, we had the first execution in over 12 years, of a man who was guilty of the crime of murder. In connection with this, we had people all over the United States that were assembling in protest, and they were trying to say that they do not believe that the government has the right to take a human life. According to the Word of God, the government not only has the *right* to take human life, but the government has the *duty* to take human life. When there is somebody guilty of premeditated or cold-blooded murder, and when government executes them, they are actually serving as the minister or the servant of God.

Notice in verse 4, "*For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid.*" Now note, "*For he beareth not the sword in vain.*" This speaks of Capital

Punishment. The "sword" was the means of execution in that day and time, and it says that "*he is the minister of God*" when they execute the criminal that is guilty of a capital offense. In the middle of verse 4 it says, "*For he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*"

Now we know that when government was initially set up, in Genesis 9:6 that the Lord told Noah and his descendants as they were beginning to repopulate the earth after the flood, that human life was sacred. Man has been created in the image of God, and therefore, man ought to recognize the sacredness of human life. God says that because human life is sacred, that the one who does not understand the sacredness of human life, if he kills or murders someone, as a judgment, he must forfeit his own life. Notice in Genesis 9:6, "*Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.*" It is by the practice Capital Punishment that we show we believe in the sanctity of human life. It is showing a disregard for human life when we let the murderer go free and do not take his life, according to the teaching of the Word of God.

Now somebody says but that's an Old Testament Scripture. Well, it matters not. Human life is just as valuable in the New Testament as it was in the Old Testament, and the law of Capital Punishment is as true today it was then.

I want you to notice another verse of Scripture, and we could give you many, but in Acts chapter 25 we see that the Apostle Paul believed in the law of Capital Punishment. In Acts 25:10-11 the Apostle Paul is talking before Festus, and he says, "*Then said Paul, I stand at*

(See **CHURCH** on page 13)

CHURCH...

(Continued from page 12)

Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I be an offender," now note the next part, "or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die." The Apostle Paul recognized that there were certain crimes that were "worthy of death," and he says if I were guilty, I would not refuse to die. So we see that the New Testament teaches that there are crimes that are "worthy of death."

Now an individual does not have the right to take life, that's murder. God has placed the authority for Capital Punishment within the government, and the government, not only has the *right* but they have the *duty* and the *responsibility* for observing the law of Capital Punishment. That one who is guilty of premeditated murder, according to the Bible, that man's life should be taken from him. This is how we show that we believe in the sanctity of human life, that no man has a right to take somebody else's life. You cannot show that you really believe in the sacredness of human life if you let somebody murder and then don't take his life, but free him to murder somebody else, and most of the murderers that you read about, have killed more than once.

I have written a book called "**Capital Punishment: Christian or Barbarian?**" We go into it very thoroughly. We use many verses of Scripture within the Bible. I only used three this morning. There are copies of this on the table. They sell for \$1.00. I don't get a penny of it; it goes to help print more books. I don't get anything out of it. If you want a copy of that, you can get a copy after services. [Our read-

ers may order it from Challenge Press.] But you see, Capital Punishment is the authority that God has given to the government to show the value and the sacredness of human life.

In this passage here in the Book of Romans, it points out the fact that we are to be obedient to our government; that we are to pay our taxes, that we are to obey the laws, that we are to participate in our government. If you don't like the laws, then you are to change the laws by the means and the proper ways that we have, either at the ballot box or by means of our elected officials. That's why every believer, every Christian, ought to vote in every election. Don't vote by party but vote for the right men, because it says that government, the men that are the operators of our government, our governmental officials, are said to be "ministers of God" for our good. Therefore we need to make certain that we get the right kind of men elected to offices regardless of party.

Now God has given this authority to the government. Is the power of government absolute? Is there a time when we should disobey government? We have just said that we are required to pay taxes, we are required to obey the laws, but is there a time when we are to disobey government? Is the authority of government unlimited or is it absolute? I believe that we can show you from the Scriptures that there are times that it may be necessary to disobey our government.

Turn with me to the Book of Acts chapter 4. In Acts chapter 4 we find two men, one of them by the name of Peter, the other one by the name of John. They have been arrested for the preaching of the gospel, and now they are to be released. It says in verse 18 "And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus."

Now the command is, you are not to preach. Now what is the answer? Notice in verses 19-20, "*But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*"

Turn to Acts 5:29. Again it is the Apostle Peter that has been called into question because, in spite of the orders he received, he still continued to preach. So verse 28 says, "*Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.*" So we see that the law of God is higher than a law of government. If government should seek to prohibit us from preaching or worshiping the Lord, God's law is higher and we ought then to obey God rather than human government. If the conflict should ever come where the government issues laws or decrees that would prohibit us from worshiping God and fulfilling the commission or the commandments of God, the Bible says we are to obey God rather than man.

Now we do that very thing right now. When I lived in Mexico as a missionary, every time that I stood up to preach, I was in violation of the laws of the country of Mexico, because in Mexico the law that's in their constitution prohibits a foreigner from preaching the gospel in Mexico. Every time I stood up to preach, or to teach in the seminary, or to do the work of a missionary in Mexico, I violated and broke the laws of Mexico, because I was a foreigner, an American citizen, and a member

of Central Baptist Church. As a missionary down there, I was in violation of the laws of Mexico. [The laws were changed in 1993 and it is now legal.] But you see, governmental laws should not stop you from obeying God, and you must disobey human law if it should interfere with the obedience of the commission and the commands that God has given. Any time that governmental authority contradicts God's authority, we are "*to obey God rather than men.*" So government does have authority that comes from God. God has given them that authority, but not unlimited authority.

God has also placed other authority here upon the earth, and he has placed that authority in the hands of man. I want you to turn to the 8th Psalm. In the 8th Psalm we find that man has been given the authority over this whole earth. In Psalm 8:6-9, speaking of man, verse 4 says "*What is man that thou art mindful of Him?*". Now notice in verse 6, "*Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!*"

In Genesis chapter 2, and we're going to have to hustle as I'm getting behind in my time as I have so much to say, but in Genesis chapter 2 we find where God again placed the earth under the control or the authority of man. Beginning in verse 18 we see that God placed all the animal kingdom, etc. under man. In Hebrews 2:8 it says, "*Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him,*

(See **CHURCH** on page 14)

CHURCH...

(Continued from page 13)

he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." Verse 8 refers to man, and it quotes this 8th Psalm in verse 6 where it says "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man." So God has placed all of creation under man's jurisdiction to control.

In Colossians chapter 3 we read in verse 18 that God has also put the wives under the authority of man. Now somebody says "you've quit preaching and gone to meddlin' right there." Well, we want to talk about woman for a few minutes. We're getting around to what our basic subject is right here, but notice in Colossians 3:18, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." It is mete, it is fit, it is proper in the Lord. Notice verse 23 in talking about women and men's relationships, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." Now to show that God has placed the man as the head of the home, let us turn to the Book of Ephesians chapter 5, because God has placed the man with the authority over the woman or the wife.

In chapter 5 of the Book of Ephesians we read in verse 22, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church." So the wife is to have her relationship to her husband in the same way that the church is to have her relationship unto the Lord.

Notice in verses 28 and 29, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the

Lord the church." Verse 33, "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

Notice in First Peter chapter 3 and verse 1, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives." So we see that the wife is put under the authority of her husband. But, the husband is to love his wife in the same manner that Jesus Christ loves His church, and it tells us here that these husbands are to honor their wives.

If a husband loves his wife, he's not going to be a domineering dictator type of an individual. When the Scripture here tells the wife that she is to reverence her husband, that husband should live such a life and conduct himself so that he will deserve her reverence. Then she will not feel compelled to reverence him, but she will reverence him because she loves him, not because of any requirement. This is the way God intends marriage to be.

I've heard it said that marriage is supposed to be a 50/50% proposition, but that is not true. Marriage is not supposed to be a 50/50% proposition, but a 100/100% proposition. The wife gives herself 100% unto her husband, and the husband gives himself 100% unto his wife, and where you find this kind of love, difficulties are more easily solved. God has placed the husband as the head of the wife.

Notice verse 7 what God tells the husband, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife." Husbands, you are to honor your wife. Though God has placed you as the head of your home, and as the head of your family,

you are to honor your wife "as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Pet. 3:7). If a husband does not honor his wife, place her on a pedestal so to speak, this verse says he's going to have difficulty in praying unto the Lord, and God answering his prayers.

You see, husband, just because God has placed you as the authority in that home does not mean that you have the right to run rough shod over your wife, but rather you are to love your wife. You're to cherish your wife. You are to honor your wife. You are to love your wife as though she were your own body. If husbands treated their wives like this, you'd never find a wife ever hit or beaten by her husband. You would find that the wife would be loved by her husband, and the husband would seek to please his wife and to know what makes her happy, and then try to make her happy. This is what you do toward one that you really love.

Now notice in this same book of First Peter chapter three. I'm afraid I'm not going to get through this morning. In First Peter 3:5 we have an example of a good wife. It says, "For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." Notice that it is "holy women", godly women who trust in the Lord that are going to place the husband as the head of their home. Holy women, godly women. It is *unholy* women, *ungodly* women, who rebel against the authority that God has designated here in the hands of the husband.

But, again I ask, is this au-

thority limited and I say yes it is. There is a teaching being taught now in the United States in what is called "Bill Gothard Institutes." They have one called "Basic Youth Conflicts" and then they have others. I would not say everything they teach is wrong, but there is one principle that they are teaching that is contrary to the Word of God, and is a very serious error. They teach what they term the "chain of command" which is basically what I am covering right here. In this, they say, that the wife is always to give obedience unto her husband. If he commands her to stay home and not to go to church, then as he is the head of that home, therefore she is to stay home. If he commands her not to go to this church but to go to that church, then she is to give obedience unto him, she is to do what he says regardless, for he is the head of the home, the authority is right here. "Wives obey your husbands." "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands." This is their authority.

Now the question is, is that unlimited? Is it absolute? Is she *always* to obey her husband? Well, the principle is this, government has limitations. We are to obey our government until they violate the teaching of God, then we are not to obey government, but we are "to obey God rather than men." Now they teach that this is true whether you're saved or lost. The principle, of course, is true to both saved and lost, for it is a principle of marriage. But let me just ask you a couple of questions right now. Suppose that a wife becomes pregnant. Her husband does not want that child and he orders her to have an abortion. Now what's that wife going to do? Abortion is murder. Abortion is the taking of the life of an unborn child. It

(See **CHURCH** on page 15)

CHURCH...

(Continued from page 14)

is murder. God says "*Thou shalt not kill.*"

Isn't it ironic that the ones who are the strongest opponents of Capital Punishment are also the strongest advocates in favor of abortion? They don't want to take the life of the murderer, but they don't have any qualms at all about taking the life of an unborn baby. Both of their positions are contradictory to the Word of God.

Now, what's that wife to do if her husband tells her that she is to have an abortion? Is she to obey her husband and be a party to the murder of her own baby? Now you see, I'm not talking about husbands that are here like this, and like maybe your husband, but there are husbands that would do that very thing. The question is, are we to obey him or are we to obey God?

Let me give you another example. Suppose a husband had a hatred for some man, and he doesn't want personally to kill him, but he orders her to pull the trigger and to kill that individual. Should she kill simply because her husband ordered her to do so?

Now let me get to something that's not very pleasant to talk about, but it is very common in some sections of our country, maybe even here as far as I know, I don't know. There are many places where "wife swapping" goes on. Suppose her husband tells her, "You are going to do this. We're going over there to this house or this party or this group tonight, and you're going to do it." Now is she to obey her husband when God says no, that's adultery? You see, authority has been given by God to the husband to be the head of that house. But just as authority given to government

is restricted when that authority disobeys the will of God or the law of God, and just as Peter and John said they were going to obey God rather than men, so the wife, if her husband orders her to do something contrary to the will of God, she has to decide whether to obey God or her husband.

Well, let me go one step further, and I'm not going to finish, so I'll have to finish tonight — the authority of parents over children. God has given the authority to parents over their children, not the State. One thing that I'm very much concerned about in this proposed "new constitution" that they're talking about right now, is that they are planning to include public schools, not just from age 6, but including even the kindergarten. They plan to take our children away from us by making it compulsory to put our children in these kindergartens. That's communist tactics. That's what they do in Russia and these communist countries because if they can take the children away, then they can begin to indoctrinate them. Our school system today is nothing but a system of indoctrination already as they indoctrinate them in things that are anti-God and anti-Christ, evolution and all these other things. You see, God has put the authority of parents over the children, not the State.

Let us notice in Ephesians 6:1, "*Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise.*" Now what is the promise? "*That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth*" (Eph. 6:1). This is God's commandment to children. Young people, teenagers, God's commandment for you is to obey your parents. God has the right to do this. Just as He has the right to give government certain authority,

and because He has the right to give the husband certain authority, He also has the right to give parents certain authority. Children, young people, teenagers, you are under the authority of your parents according to the Word of God. God places that authority right there.

Now look at Colossians 3:20, "*Children, obey your parents in all things.*" Now that ought to settle a lot of questions right there, shouldn't it? "*Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.*" If you want to please God, then you obey your parents. When you rebel against the authority of your parents, you are rebelling against God, and what you are doing is not pleasing unto God.

Now while we're small, there's no problem with that. It's only when we become teenagers that we find our problem of submitting to the authority of our parents. But that's God's Word.

Let me read two more verses. I'm not going to have time to finish now, so I'm just going ahead and read these Scriptures that I probably would expand on otherwise. Turn with me to the Book of Proverbs, chapter 23. Notice verse 22, "*Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.*" That is not practiced by teenagers today. When they get to be 14, 15, 16 or 17, when the conflicts begin to come in the home as they rebel against the authority of their parents, it in many cases reaches the point that the teenagers begin to despise their parents. That is what God says is wrong. You are to honor your parents. "*And despise not thy mother when she is old.*"

I never will forget one day. I don't know how old I was, just a little bit before I left home to go into the Marine Corps, probably 16 or 17. I smarted off to my mother in a sarcastic way,

and I was very impolite to her. I don't know what I said, but I didn't say it a second time. My Dad grabbed a hold of me and before I knew what was going on he took his fist and he put his fist in front of my face. He said, "Son, I want you to know that when I married your mother, I married her because I loved her. I promised to protect her and to make sure that she is not talked to like that, and you're not going to talk to her like that and get by with it either." I don't know what I said, but I didn't say it a second time. Boy, when he shook his fist in my face, I shook. Let me tell you now, children, teenagers, God says that you are to honor your parents.

Notice in First Timothy chapter 5 and verse 4, and I've got to hustle. "*But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents; for that is good an acceptable before God.*" You are to learn "*piety at home and to requite their parents.*" That means to give honor, reverence and respect to your parents. You are to learn this at home.

Again, is the authority of parents limited? Or is it absolute? Are there times, is there any time, when maybe children are to disobey their parents? Or is the authority of parents over children absolute? Well, according to Bill Gothered they are to obey their parents in everything regardless. But let us raise the question. I'm sure that some of you have read about some of these rings of stealers, robbers, and thieves in which parents sometimes take their children out and order their children to steal for them. They'll have them go into stores and shoplift and bring the stuff home. There have been cases where the father would take his child to a home, and finding a window

(See **CHURCH** on page 16)

JAPAN...

(Continued from page 3)

there are no repercussions for your choices. Even in Israel, a Jew is constrained. For example, if he chooses to become a Christian, he loses his citizenship. He has more religious freedom in America. If a Moslem in a Moslem country chooses to become a Christian, he will likely lose his life.

"In America he can be Moslem or not, simply as he chooses, and if he chooses to continue to be a Moslem, his faith is developed freely. Even an atheist has more religious freedom in Christian America than under atheistic communism. In Christian America, no one has to be a Christian to enjoy full social or political privileges. Where do these people stand in Christian America? **In the very freest place possible.**"

Thanks for the clarification.

CHURCH...

(Continued from page 15)

too small for him to enter, would put his child through the window and have the child open the door, and together the father and the children would steal. Suppose the father orders the child to do so. Should that child obey his father when he orders him to steal?

Or what about a case of murder. There was one case of a teenager that killed somebody when he and his father were out stealing and the teenager had the gun. The father ordered the teenager to kill the man, and the teenager did. Of course, the teenager was too small to be tried for murder, maybe 12, 13 or 14 years of age, but he murdered on the orders of his father. Should the son obey his father when his father orders him to

shoot and to kill somebody, or to go out and to steal and to do things like this? I think the verse of Acts 5:29 still applies. It is better "to obey God rather than men."

Suppose a father, orders that teenager, not to go to church. We've had that happen in this church. What should that teenager do? You see, God gives authority and we are to obey that authority, but the time comes where if the authority orders us to disobey God, we have to make a decision, shall we obey God rather than man.

I'm sure there are time when there are questions whether we should obey our parents, or whether we should obey our husband, or whether we should obey the government, but there are things that are of sufficient nature that we must obey God rather than man. Though God has given authority to governments, there are times that we must obey God rather than our government. Though God has placed the husband as the head of the home, there are times when the wife must obey God rather than her husband. And though God has placed children in the home under the authority of the parents, there may be times when the children must obey God rather than the parents.

Now I am sure that what I have said probably does not apply to anybody here this morning, but these are principles that we find in the Word of God. When we get to look at that woman Jezebel in Revelation chapter two, we find that her sin was that of rebelling against the authority of God, because what she was doing violated the authority of God. We'll go into this further tonight. I intended to cover it this morning, but tonight we'll go into the Word of God as to what things God prohibits women from doing in a church. Then we will find that the very

things that God says women are *not* to do in the church, were the very things that Jezebel was *doing* in the church. We see not only that she was attacking the authority of God in the church, but she was attacking the authority of God on the home for she was seducing others to commit fornication. It was also an attack against the home.

Then tonight, we'll also look at women in the Bible as to what they can do, and how God has taught so wonderfully well about certain women in the Bible such as Phoebe. We're going to look at Phoebe tonight. I hope that you'll come back tonight. I'm sorry that didn't get through this today. I wanted to, but we'll finish this up tonight. You plan to be back this evening.

AUGER...

(Continued from page 7)

place.

Let us be jealous for the churches. Let us support them, work in them, tithe through them, sacrifice for them, live in their fellowship and some day die in their communion and look forward to the bright and blessed day when the assembly that is in prospect shall be in fact and all believers shall gather in the glory with Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. This blessed Christ who loved the church and gave Himself for *it*.

DEFENSE...

(Continued from page 11)

against non-religious people.

"It is the Clinton Administration's chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission who is now seeking to promulgate regulations which would ban all religious expression in the work place.

"It is the Clinton Administration's surgeon general who advocates the wholesale distribution of condoms in the school systems of America.

"It is the Clinton Administration which seeks to cut out money from abstinence education in the federal budget.

"It is the Clinton Administration which talks a hard line against drug dealers but then cuts funding for the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

"It is the Clinton Administration which seeks, through socialized medicine, a system which will end up rationing health care and sending to jail anyone who tries to get around the system.

"Time doesn't permit the litany to continue. These policy initiatives push people of faith into a corner. Their values are being attacked. They are seeking a redress of grievances through the political process, which is their constitutional right.

"Religious people didn't initiate any of these policies. They are being foisted upon them by an Administration void of any sound value system. Religious people, in short, are defending themselves.