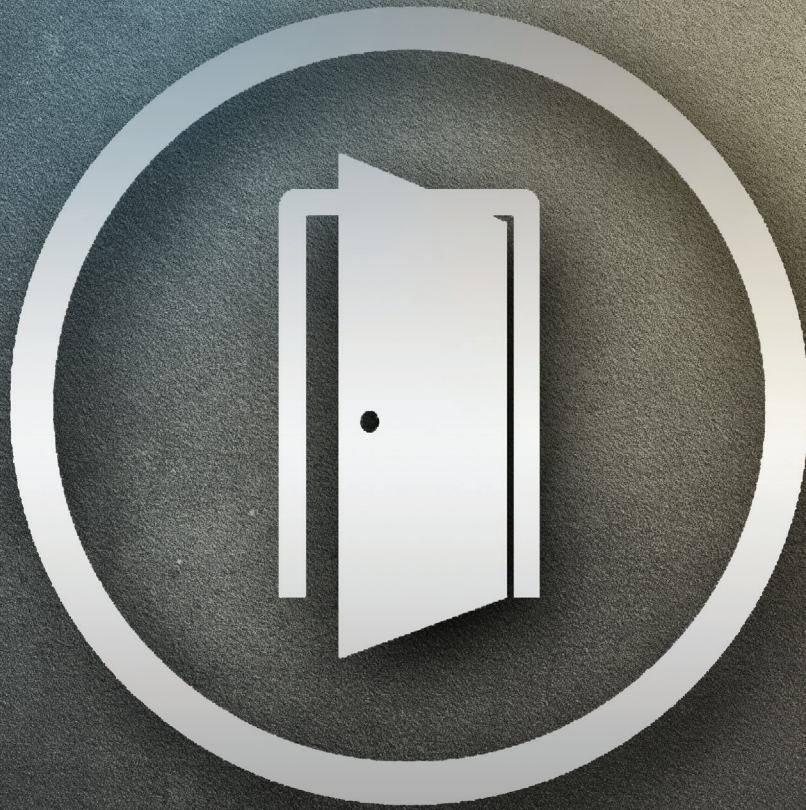


VOL.25 NO.01
INDIANA BIBLE COLLEGE



Perspectives



THAT ALL MAY COME

THAT ALL MAY COME



From The Publisher

The Enemy Hates For a Reason

Paul D. Mooney

“Do we not agree that there is an Antichrist working in the world? I believe it is our duty to expose anti-Christian forces wherever they appear, especially among Christianity itself.”

“Our first task is therefore to try to grasp what the concept of the enemy really means. The enemy is someone who is willing to die in order to kill you. And while it is true that the enemy always hates us for a reason, it is his reason, and not ours.” These gripping words open Lee Harris’ book entitled *Civilization and Its Enemies: The Next Stage of History* (Free Press, 2004). With this compelling language, Harris challenges us to ponder the very concept of the term “enemy.” This has never been more important. Defining the enemy is paramount to winning any great struggle.

As Christians it is critical to examine how this concept of “enemy” affects the battle raging against our fundamental doctrines and values. Christ was clear as to the nature of our spiritual enemy in His admonition to His disciples. “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy” (John 10:10). The enemy’s methods and agendas will always be contrary to righteousness. He will come up another way, as Christ describes. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber” (John 10:1).

Humanity’s most unspeakable crime is genocide. Just look at recent history - not ancient history, but the history that has unfolded during our lifetime. It reeks with unspeakable horror. The Nazi genocide against the Jews, Armenian genocide, Cambodian genocide, Liberian genocide, genocide in the Congo, in Bosnia, and the genocide in many other parts of the world ... the sum of the loss represents millions of lives. Millions!

Haris Silajdzic, former president of Bosnia, where more than 100,000 were slaughtered in the mid 1990s, discussed genocide stating that, “genocide is a design, as any genocide must be, because it is not possible to kill a big number of people without prior preparation, mental preparation, military preparation. Sophisticated methods are needed; but the will, not the way—that’s the critical part” (*Worse Than War*, Goldhagen, 2009).

As President Silajdzic pointed out, the evil of all evils is genocide. Typically, it has been the result of one man’s evil mind (Hitler, Pol Pot, Stalin) and such a mind exploits the prejudices, distorted belief systems, and hatred that preexist in a culture. He exploits the desire for utopian ideals. He becomes the heroic leader. Such a leader furnishes not only the language, but the philosophy, justification and the courage to act upon even the basest of selfish desires. “The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?” (Jeremiah 5:31).

We must ask the question whether there is a will among some enemies to destroy what we believe and to climb up some other way? Are there some who not only desire to forsake the doctrine for themselves, but who also want to destroy the influence of truth all together? Do we not agree that there is an Antichrist working in the world? I believe it is our duty to expose anti-Christian forces wherever they appear, especially among Christianity itself. The enemy encourages men to live by their own will. He tells them what they want to hear. His influence causes them to ignore the necessity of truth, spirit and revelation. And ultimately, their misguided passion, to live by their own will and desires, leads them to kill what they once loved.

Jesus said, “my sheep hear my voice” but those who do not accept Christ as the “door” or the way do not hear. Furthermore, when they come to you, they come to destroy. They are not shepherds of truth. They are not shepherds of the way. They come to kill. They are the enemy. The sheep and the shepherd have the same objective: life. “I am the good shepherd.” And, a moment later, He speaks a great truth to them, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30) and, at this revelation, “the Jews took up stone to kill him.” Christ herein defines the motives of the Antichrist. There was no denying the enemy’s ultimate objective.

It is imperative that the church see the enemy of the church for who he is. He is “the son of perdition” and the father of lies. And those who follow him have identified with that same spirit. “Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10).

Those who lead our children away from the clear message of the Upper Room, who use their various talents to deceive and deconstruct the Apostles’ doctrine and moral standards—intend to destroy them. What the Apostles preached on Pentecost morning was Christ-given. They had *all* just received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The Upper Room was without contrary opinion. The historical record is clear: they baptized in Jesus’ name because it was the single name given. They knew they had seen the Father manifest in the flesh. It was revealed to them, by the very God who stood before them as a man. They had no concept of a trinity. “O Sweet Wonder,” to quote G.T. Haywood.

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WEBSITE MANAGER:

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Web Site: www.ibcperspectives.com

E-mail: tmassengale@apostolic.edu

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♦To promote revival and growth among Apostolic churches and pastors by encouraging unity and cooperation among those of like faith and by providing a forum for the sharing of new ideas, ministries and programs.

♦To report on those trends and events which directly affect the work of the church.

♦To promote and enhance the ongoing ministry of Indiana Bible College.

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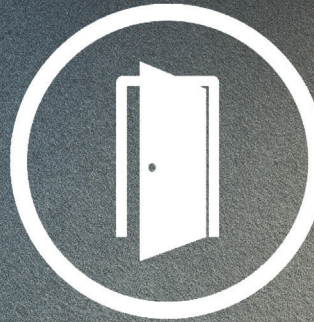
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Feature:

That All May Come

(Rick Stoops)

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COMMUNION: CELEBRATING THE LORD'S SUPPER

Compiled by Brittney Ragan

Note: The opinions on this page are entirely those of the individual and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Indiana Bible College.



Mark A. Brown, Watertown, SD -- Our congregation receives communion at Easter and around Christmas. Every time our church has communion, the whole service is centered on it. Our congregation consists mostly of first generation Pentecostals, and many have little church background. Some of the newer members

have an understanding of communion that stems from a Catholic or Lutheran faith. This gives me an opportunity to relate to them on some level, but also to introduce communion from a biblical perspective.

Communion is something we essentially need to do, so we don't forget the price and purpose of Christ's blood and sacrifice. For our church, communion has been a great unifier and is always a time of repentance and searching of hearts. God always shows up.



Clifton R. Turner Jr., Colorado Springs, CO -- Our church reserves communion for 3-4 special times a year, specifically the New Year's holiday. We do this in order for communion to remain special, and so the partakers have the utmost respect for it. Our entire church has a moment of repentance, and then we take communion at the same time,

as one body. After communion, we have a time of prayer to express our gratitude to the Lord for His great sacrifice. We accompany communion with foot washing every other year. There was a message I picked up at a campmeeting by Scott Graham, entitled "The Sand In My Shoes." It was such a powerful message about service that I decided to incorporate the message in our special communion and foot washing services. The end result was a very special and spiritual moment for everyone.



Greg W. Davis, DeKalb, IL -- Our church participates in communion around New Year's Eve and Easter. We have the whole service geared toward communion, and I usually prepare a special message. We stage communion according to scripture: partaking of bread, then grape juice. Communion generates understanding and appreciation for where we come from, and what the Lord has done for us. It's His church, His sacrifice, and His covering. Occasionally we pair communion with foot washing. We have also gone to other churches and participated in foot washing in a combined effort. The essential aspect of communion is dealing with the blood of Calvary, and the importance of that blood in our lives. We cannot be a successful Christian if we rid the preaching of the blood from our pulpits.

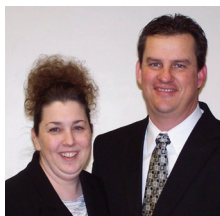


Thomas E. Snyder, Lima, OH -- Our church participates in communion around the New Year. We almost always include foot washing, as it was a part of the Last Supper activities. Foot washing reminds us that while we are reflecting on our own spiritual condition, we should exhibit humble service to each other. One year I met with each family privately and talked with them about the significance of communion. As a family, they partook of the flesh and blood of Christ, and committed themselves afresh to each other and to the Lord. The father of each family made a verbal commitment to serve the Lord with all his heart, soul and strength. Is communion necessary for salvation? No. But to refuse to do something the Lord asks us to do might say a lot about our sincerity to follow Him.

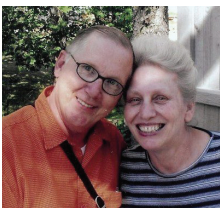


Joseph E. Romero, Brooklyn, MI -- The churches I have been involved in have participated in communion in conjunction with the New Year holiday or a special service. There is no directive in either the gospels or epistles regarding specifically how often to partake in communion. However, scripture is clear that communion should be observed, and that it is not a one-time event (Luke 22:19, 1 Cor. 11:26). Nonetheless, determining exactly how often the first century church partook of communion based on scripture alone is mostly guesswork. Circumstantial evidence within the New Testament does suggest that the first century church did communion in connection with a regular "agape" feast, which leads me to believe communion was probably more than once a year, perhaps even weekly.

Luke 22:19: "This do in remembrance of me." Paul mirrors this sentiment in 1 Cor. 11:26 when he expects us to partake of communion together "until he [Jesus] comes." Indeed, the Greek word for communion itself means "fellowship." In this context, communion is fellowship with the Lord, His death, and His body -- the church. The whole point of scripture is the unfolding story of our restored fellowship with God, and communion illustrates this beautifully.



Timothy G. Koonce, Belvidere, IL -- Communion is a beautiful way for Christians to commemorate Christ's redemptive sacrifice on Calvary. Our church partakes in communion 1 to 2 times per year, accompanied with foot washing. The entire service is centered on repentance and consecration. I haven't found scripture to be specific concerning how often Christians should participate in communion. However, the scripture is clear we should do it in remembrance of Christ. It is necessary for us to remember what Christ has done for us through His suffering and pain, to give us redemption from our sinful nature. If we make it unimportant, we can take for granted what Christ has done to give us salvation.

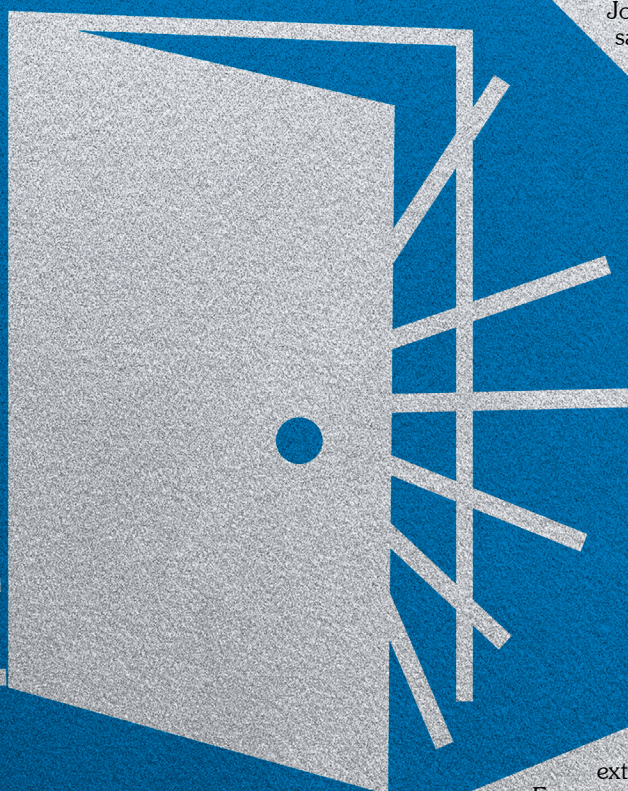


Alan D. Peevler, Berea, KY -- Communion is an essential ordinance of the church. In the Old Testament, the Passover was mandatory for the Jews. Likewise, I feel communion is mandatory for the born-again Christian. We partake of communion on New Year's and Good Friday. Our congregation always participates in foot washing before communion. Foot washing stresses the idea of humility, love, servanthood, and prayer. I feel it

helps our hearts be better prepared for communion.

After foot washing, I teach about the importance of communion. We have two large tables set up in the sanctuary, resembling the Last Supper. The lights are dimmed, and the tables are nicely decorated with table cloths, dinnerware and beautiful candelabras. All of the plates are right side up, except for the place at the end, where we suspect Jesus might have sat. That plate is left unturned. We have people come up 12 at a time to sit at the table, and partake in communion. We continue, until everyone has taken part. I first experienced this type of communion service as an evangelist. I went to sit down at the communion table, next to where Jesus might have been. As I was praying, I felt as though I was sitting next to the Master himself. We then began to sing, "He was nailed to the cross for me." The atmosphere was powerful and the service meaningful.

THAT ALL MAY COME



"That all may come" is certainly the focus of the First United Pentecostal Church in Augusta, Maine. Pastor Rick L. Stoops and his wife, Shari, have pastored the church since 1982 with that specific focus. They have three sons: Eric (38), Shane (36), Zachary (20) and one daughter, Sararuth (30).

Bro. Stoops has served as District Superintendent of Maine since 1996. In the past, he served as District North American Mission Director (1994-1996), District Youth President of Maine (1986-1993) and Sectional Presbyter (1985-1996).

The Stoops planted a church in Waterville, Maine and in 1982 were asked to pastor the First United Pentecostal Church of Augusta when the pastor, Bro. Willhoite, and his wife became missionaries to Wales, England, UK.

Principles of Growth & Revival

"A revival pastor must keep his hands in the harvest to stay on the cutting edge," said Bro. Stoops. "He needs to teach at least one or more home Bible studies per week. I teach four to five. A revival pastor needs sufficient time in prayer and study to bring Holy Ghost-anointed messages from God's Word. This reduces time spent in counseling. God can do more in five minutes of powerful Holy Ghost, laser-accurate preaching and teaching than multiple hours of counsel."

Ministries of the church include Home Bible Studies, Bus Ministry, and an Easter Passion Play that is advertised to the community. "The church strives for top quality worship, and we saturate the area, once a year, with a bulk direct mailing to all within a 30-minute drive of the church," said Bro. Stoops. "A non-Apostolic church grows for the same reason a business grows:

high quality of friendly service, good music, nice facilities, prime location, an organized approach, an articulate presentation of the Word of God, and excellent youth and children's programs. All of these are important, but above all else, an Apostolic church needs to please God. Joshua and Caleb gave insight into this when they said: *'If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land and give it to us; a land which floweth with milk and honey'* (Numbers 14:8). Many times guests will feel the Spirit and anointing of God from the opening song of an Apostolic church that is walking within its covenant.

"A growing church needs to target people of influence in the community who will influence many others to turn to Christ, as well as the down and out. There is precedence in the Bible for targeting people of

influence. Joseph targeted Potiphar, the keeper of the prison, the King's baker and butler, and ultimately Pharaoh himself. This produced a revival that literally saved the children of Israel from extinction. Hadassah witnessed to the Persian Emperor, became Queen Esther, and saved her people from annihilation. A maiden witnessed to the wife of the captain of the Syrian army, and Naaman was miraculously healed. Philip was led by the Spirit to witness to the Treasurer of Queen Candace of Ethiopia, and great revival followed that has continued to this day. Too many Pentecostals are intimidated by the professionals in their community and only feel comfortable witnessing to the poor and destitute. We also need to witness to our doctors, lawyers, politicians and business people. No one should go to hell simply because he is a hard worker and successful in business. We reproduce the clientele we target. A church that targets only the down and out will struggle, because like begets like. A hunter does not shoot at a rabbit and kill a moose. He hits what he targets." Bro. Stoops noted that since they began targeting people of influence, the Governor and First Lady of the state of Maine, members of the Governor's cabinet, and several state senators and representatives have attended. One Maine state representative is a member of the church, and they have won three doctors, several



Pastor Stoops ministers to the congregation.

business owners, nurses, and a high school band director to the Lord, and many others have converted to the faith.

Organization & Management

Departments and ministries of First United Pentecostal Church include Greeters, Ushers, Music, Elders, Sunday School, Youth, Internet, Men, Ladies and a Knitting group that makes prayer shawls for people who are sick as well as for wives of state or city leaders who visit the church. The elders anoint the prayer shawls with oil, and they are given away.

"We have one major planning session each year, as well as much planning with individual leaders throughout the year," said Pastor Stoops. "I strongly believe that Apostolic ministry is 'caught' by example as well as 'taught.' As I walk in the Spirit, minister in the Spirit, operate in the gifts of the Spirit, and pray people through to the Holy Ghost, Apostolic ministry is caught. We cannot expect those we pastor to rise above our example.

"A good percentage of our people are in some type of ministry, and a large percentage are involved in evangelism. A growing church must continually have its eyes upon the fields, or it will cease to grow and begin to have conflicts. I have made it a point to teach the benefits of involvement in the Kingdom. The happiest Christians are involved Christians."

Special Miracles

Several years ago, a pastor took Bro. Stoops to tour a large church in his city. Bro. Stoops was amazed to find that although the church had little Biblical truth, many had come there and had received notable miracles and healings. He said, "Crutches were on the walls as silent testimony to God's healing power. I went to the Lord in prayer, feeling troubled that too many Apostolic people were going without much needed miracles, while people who did not know the truth were receiving miracles. God showed me that His healing power is given as a result of faith. He will honor faith wherever He finds it. You can be strong in doctrine and weak in faith. We need both! God began to deal with my heart about being an ambassador of Christ. I was reminded that an ambassador is appointed to do what his sovereign would, if he were present. "God confirms the word of his servant and performs the counsel of his messengers" (Isaiah 44:26).

Bro. Stoops realized he had been waiting for God to do the miracle, while God had been waiting for him to speak so he could confirm and perform. He explained, "The Apostle Peter told the lame man, 'Such as I have give I thee.' Jesus said, 'Whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven. As the Father hath sent me, so send I thee. Say to yonder mountain, be thou removed.' Many more miracles will happen if we, as His ambassadors, leave

our comfort zone and speak the word of faith. Since receiving this revelation, I have seen crossed eyes uncross, color blindness healed, a deaf ear healed, a leg grow, cancers healed, backs healed, chronic pain healed, the dead raised, and a woman who had not stood for ten years stand instantly as the result of a one sentence command, 'Be healed in the name of Jesus!' One significant miracle can propel a church into great revival!"



Rick and Shari Stoops
Augusta, Maine

Personal Ministry

Pastor Stoops said he is entirely dependent upon being led by the Lord. "And I appreciate the benefits of belonging to the greatest ministerial fellowship in the world," he said. "The UPCI has put me in contact with the greatest preachers and influencers of our times.

"Growing churches preach to sinners. It is non-productive at best and destructive at worst for the preacher to preach to saints and ignore the guests. Preach the power of the blood to wash, the power of the Holy Ghost to fill, and deliverance of the captives. You will get what you preach."

Current Facility

"Our sanctuary seats 550," said Bro. Stoops. "But it is not unusual to have 1,200 on Easter weekend in four services. We have had 60 filled with the Holy Ghost since January of this year, and we recently purchased acreage next to our sanctuary for future growth. In 1984, we were just entering a building program when I went to General Conference. During the Foreign Missions service, I felt impressed by the Lord to take on every missionary as partners. I argued with the Lord that we were launching a building program, but the Lord persisted. When we arrived home, a preacher friend called, asking if we were planning to build a new building. He had found enough beams for a 60' x 120' structure. They were valued at \$40,000, and we purchased them for \$3,500."

Personal History

In 1938, 17 years before Bro. Stoops was born, his father, Resal Stoops, took his wife and her family to Bro. Charles Rigdon's church in Whitehall, IL. "My father had no knowledge of truth, but he had heard about the baptism of the Holy Ghost and wanted to receive this gift," said Bro. Stoops. "As a result of that single invitation, there are at least 17 Apostolic preachers in our family today. Other converts of that revival were my aunt, Sis. Nilah Rutledge Mean, whose convert was a nun named Sis. Charlotte. Under their ministry, two of our General Board members, Bro. T.F. Tenney and Bro. Mike Conn, were converted. There are literally thousands in the Kingdom because of one single invitation."

Bro. Stoops was born in Granite City, Illinois and grew up in Caseyville, Illinois. He attended a church pastored by Bro. Everett Lowery as a small child. "I received the Holy Ghost at age 9," he said. "My mother, Rev. Edith Stoops, my sister, Pastor Sharon Springer Walston, and Rev. Audrey Feigl started a home mission church in Caseyville. I preached my first revival at age 16, became a licensed minister at 17, and started my first church at 21. One of the converts from my outreach at Collinsville High School was Bro. Harold Williams, who later became pastor of the United Pentecostal Church in Maryville, Illinois. I attended Gateway College of Evangelism from 1973-1976, where Bro. W.C. Parkey, Bro. Paul Dugas, Bro. Jacob Nelson and others helped shape and mold my ministry. My mother was always involved in the work of God and was the greatest influence in my childhood. My wife, Shari, is my most loyal supporter and the best pastor's wife a man could ever want.

"What many people probably don't know about me is that I am a pilot and have a Cessna 172 that I use to travel all over our district. I can be just about anywhere in two hours, and Maine's scenery of rocky coastlines, rolling mountains, forests and picturesque waterways is more fully enjoyed from the sky."



The exterior of First United Pentecostal Church in Augusta, ME

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WHO ARE WE?

Azusa StreetRiders is a motorcycle "ministry" not a "club."

Our members are Oneness Apostolic bikers—all are filled with the Holy Ghost and baptized in Jesus' name.

Pastors must sign a statement approving member's application—no rogue bikers/Apostolics are accepted.

Azusa StreetRiders pledge to faithfully attend and support their churches and their pastors however possible, including tithes and offerings.

Azusa StreetRiders are not trying to start "biker churches." Instead, we focus on helping our pastors build our local churches.

Around the world, there are nearly 700 Trinitarian motorcycle ministries or clubs but Azusa StreetRiders is the world's only Oneness Apostolic motorcycle ministry. For witnessing and outreach effectiveness, help us grow and keep it this way!

Members of Azusa StreetRiders are located in 32 States, Canada and six other countries. Help us grow!

Every year, we give motorcycles, motorbikes and even bicycles to Oneness Apostolic foreign missionaries through our "Motorcycles for Missionaries" program.

Azusa StreetRiders is a 501(c)3 organization and every penny collected through membership dues, product sales, fundraisers or donations is used for "Motorcycles for Missionaries" or ministry promotion—no salaries. All labor is voluntary. Not even travel and meal costs are reimbursed.

As a ministry, Azusa StreetRiders empowers men and women to become active in church outreach and provides needed fellowship opportunities.

Each year, local Azusa StreetRiders chapters across the US and Canada host "Biker Sunday" events to expose bikers to the soul-saving message of Acts 2:38. We also have a US National Rally, open to public, with terrific motorcycle group rides, fellowship, outreach, teaching and preaching sessions with nationally recognized speakers.

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Seven Traits of Pastors That Turned Their Churches Around

By Dr. Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources

The churches I have studied are churches that were once declining, but now are growing in a healthy fashion. The decline may have been dramatic, or it may have been almost imperceptible. In almost every case, however, the pastors intentionally adopted seven traits that were key to the churches' turnaround.

1. *These pastors faced reality.* They looked at the current condition of the church. They likely did an informational historical survey of attendance trends. They refused to put their heads in the sand.

2. *They became leaders of hope.* They looked at biblical truth regarding possibilities. They communicated that hope to their congregations. They truly believed all things are possible through God, including the revitalization of seemingly dying churches.

3. *They adopted a long-term perspective.* They likely did not make some type of public declaration of their intent, but began leading as if they were going to be at their current church for around 10 years. Most of them admitted they did not want to close the door if they sensed God's leadership elsewhere, but they led as if they were going to be around for a while. In other words, they were not seeking to move.

4. *They led incrementally.* Because they had a long-term perspective, they were willing to lead in a way that the congregation could manage. It was not at the speed the pastors desired, but it was healthy for the churches.

5. *They learned how to deal with critics and setbacks.* Most of these pastors determined they would deal with challenging issues in a positive way. Many of them had their own inner processes developed to deal with critics.

6. *The pastors developed their own intentional outward focus.* Many of them admitted they had become inwardly focused, so they started getting out in their communities. A number of them became highly intentional about sharing their faith on a regular basis.

7. *They led their churches to an outward focus.* These pastors began to lead their churches beyond their own walls. More energy and time were devoted to connecting with their communities and beyond. The congregations became Great Commission churches in action, not just in theory.



Scared, Hurt and Broken

By Stephen Judd, TCM President



Stephen Judd
www.mansionkids.org

The destruction we see in young lives is worse than any tornado, flood or fire that you see in the news. The devastation of abuse, abandonment and neglect may not always show outwardly. Rather, it's an erosion of the spirit, a loss of hope and a fear that, "I will never be safe."

Recent endorsements from noted leaders such as these are much appreciated: "The love and support that you show to children each day makes a tremendous difference to this state. Obviously, your care and the Christian environment you provide have a profound impact on the children you serve. However, your reach extends much further. Your mission and example touch the lives of people throughout the community, and I know the lives of those who support your efforts are changed for the better as a result of your service."—Phil Bryant, Governor of Mississippi

"TCM, what a wonderful place for our children when they have nowhere else to go. As the auditor for TCM for a number of years, I can attest to the fact that they utilize every resource available and use 'your' money wisely. You can't go wrong by investing your contribution with TCM,

who in turn will invest it in our future...

our children."—Aubrey Jayroe, TCM Vice Chairman, Arkansas District Secretary UPCI

These expressions of support are wonderful; however, the most significant endorsements come from those who have personally been impacted by this ministry. Katie Albanito, a former TCM resident, recently shared her story with me: "Fourteen years ago I arrived at Tupelo Children's Mansion—a scared, hurt and broken 15-year-old. My childhood was marked by abandonment, rejection and self-loathing—leaving me confused, angry and unable to connect with my family. I am so thankful that the Mansion took me in when I found myself in such a desperate situation. I'm eternally grateful for the opportunity I had to live at the Mansion, where I learned that 'with God all things are possible' and that 'He will never leave me nor forsake me.' Because of God's grace and mercy, I'm right where I need to be, serving in the Sunday school at my local church and teaching my own children about God's love."

As we close out 2014, may I appeal to you one more time to consider sending an end-of-the-year offering to help us continue reaching out to children like Katie? Thank you for believing in this great cause.

To support TCM with a special offering, go to www.mansionkids.org, or mail your check to TCM, PO Box 167, Tupelo, MS 38802.



CHURCH LOAN FUND

The United Pentecostal Church Loan Fund is a financial ministry that benefits and blesses individuals, churches and ministries of the United Pentecostal Church.

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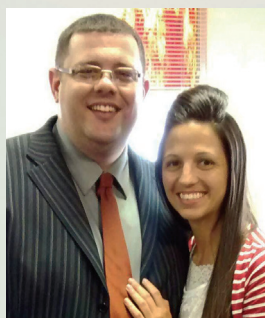
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Oneness Theology

ASKING THE TOUGH QUESTIONS

Interviewed By Gregg Stone



Joe and Jessica Giunta
Detroit, MI

Bro. Giunta, tell us a little about yourself and your family.

I am a full-time evangelist for the United Pentecostal Church International. Previously, I pastored CrossPoint Apostolic Church

in Inglis, Florida. My wife, Jessica, and I now live in Detroit, Michigan.

Many Trinitarians will immediately go to Matthew 28:19 to support their view of the trinity; how do you answer them regarding that scripture?

First, there are too many flaws in using this portion of scripture to support the trinity; too many to name in this article.

To address the scripture at hand, we must analyze what Jesus said. He told the disciples to go and teach, baptizing converts in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. You will notice that He didn't say "in the NAMES," but "in the NAME." He told them of the fact that He would come back to them and even be in them as the Holy Ghost. Now He tells them to baptize, using one name.

The word *of* is also of much importance. In this text, it means "belongs to" or "belonging to." Therefore, when we apply obedience to the words of Christ instead of just repeating them verbatim, we understand that what He is actually telling His disciples to do is to baptize converts in the ONE name that belongs to the Father, and belongs to the Son, and belongs to the Holy Ghost. That one name is Jesus!

Many Trinitarians want to know that if Jesus is indeed God, who did He pray to in the Garden, and if He is God, why did He need to pray?

This stance does not present a

problem to Oneness believers. It does, however, present major problems for supporters of the trinity. My question to them is, "If Jesus is the second EQUAL person of the godhead, having the same will, power and presence as the Father, why does He need to pray to Him for help? Can't He just do it Himself?"

We, as believers in Oneness, understand that Jesus was just as perfectly human as He was God. We know that in His humanity He needed strength from the Spirit just as any other human would in a time of need. This does not take away from the fact that He is God manifest in flesh. Just because He prayed to God who dwelt in Him as His Spirit and divine nature does not take away from Him being God Almighty. Jesus on earth was God manifest in flesh.

How would you explain Isaiah 6:8 to someone who supported the Trinitarian viewpoint?

We see in Isaiah 6:8 that the Lord, in Isaiah's vision of the throne, asks the Seraphim, "Whom shall I send, who will go for us?" God is speaking and including His angels in that He is sending a representative for the kingdom as a whole. This is another scripture that they will use to try to show multiple persons. The problem is the first part of God's question. It is "Whom shall I send?" not "Whom shall WE send?" He is speaking to His angels because they were included in His kingdom, but did not give them the authority to do the sending. This is where Genesis 1:26 comes in.

Many Trinitarians quickly go to Matthew 3:17 to make their case. What's your response?

The thing Trinitarians are trying to get us to see at Jesus' baptism is the fact that "all three divine persons" are present. The problem is that no matter how we look at it, there is only one "divine person" present.

The voice that speaks from heaven is supposed to show us how the Father is a different person from Jesus. However, we see many times in scripture where God

speaks from unusual places. Once He spoke from a bush, another time from a donkey. In fact, He even speaks through you and me. Does that make us God? I hope not. We are talking about God here. If He wants to, He can speak from the mouth of Jesus or from the throne in heaven. Remember He is God.

The dove was not actually a dove. It was the Spirit descending "like a dove." The dove wasn't a third person. It was a sign to John showing who the messianic anointment was upon. This was not three persons, but three manifestations of the same God, each with divine purpose as to showing Himself through Jesus. Jesus again is being shown as God manifest in flesh.

Many Trinitarians are quick to say, "The trinity is a great mystery, and we can't really understand it." Briefly, clear up that thought.

Usually, when Trinitarians are all out of questions and answers, they will resort to this statement. However, when we look at scripture, we see that God is not the author of confusion. He made His identity known repeatedly in a clear and understandable way. In fact, being a God who wants a personal and intimate relationship with us, He almost has to. How can we have an intimate and personal relationship with someone when we can't even understand who they are?

It is God's will for us all to know Jesus in a close and personal way. If we are to do that, He will always make it plain to us who we are having that relationship with. If we study the Word and seek God for a deeper and more perfect understanding, putting away the traditional teaching of mainstream Christianity, we will all come to find Jesus as the mighty God in Christ.

What is the title of your book and where can it be purchased?

The title of my book is *Any More Questions?* and is available at Pentecostal Publishing House or www.anymorequestionsbook.com.

For information about these events, call the event coordinator. If you would like your event on this list, call (800) 8000-AIS. IBC Perspectives does not endorse any seminar or conference listed. This page is provided simply as a service to the greater Apostolic community.

apostolic alendar 2015

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	SPEAKERS	CONTACT / INFO
JAN 30	Indiana Bible College LIVE RECORDING Under the direction of Lindel M. Anderson, Dean of Music	Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave. Indianapolis, IN Host: Paul D. Mooney	Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenbush, Lindel Anderson, IBC Choir, IBC Chorale, IBC Praise, others	ibc@apostolic.edu www.go2ibc.com or call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069
FEB 19-21	WinterFire 2015 WinterFire's focus is ministering to those in ministry. Our objective is that every member of your team will leave renewed and refreshed.	First Cathedral 1151 Blue Hills Ave. Bloomfield, CT 06002	Sam Emory, Jelaine Lumpkin, Elias Limones, Mark Morgan, Theodore Brooks, Jerry Jones, David Bernard, David Hudson and I.J. Cunningham	For more info: visit www.winterfire.org or visit Twitter: winterfire-conf or Facebook: winterfire
FEB 25-28	INAAP Regional Training Center Empowering and equipping Apostolic leaders to build the Kingdom of God. Our vision is to align the Apostles and Prophets for the purpose of affirmation, awakening, aligning and activation.	Liberty Tabernacle 6177 N. 75 W. New Whiteland, IN 46184	Apostle John Arcovio, Apostle Amador Valensuela, and Prophet Mike East	For more info: visit www.spiritled.net , e-mail spiritledm@gmail.com , or call 888-776-0797
FEB 26-28	Indiana Bible College CONNECT 2015 Your chance to visit the IBC campus and see what Bible college is all about!	Indiana Bible College 1502 Sumner Ave Indianapolis, IN 46227 Host: Paul D. Mooney	Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenbush, Jason Gallion, Bobby Killmon, Lindel Anderson, others.	ibc@apostolic.edu www.go2ibc.com or call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069
MARCH 19-21	Times of Refreshing - Tulare, CA Services times are Thursday and Friday at 7:30 p.m., and Saturday at 6:30 p.m.	Living Christ Church Tulare, CA Host Pastors: James McPhail, Don Demyan, Brian Allard and Arthur Law	Jeff Arnold, Doug White and Gordon Poe	For more info: visit www.gordonpoe.com/TOR/conference . (717) 755-7202
APRIL 15-17	Indiana Bible College MUSIC FEST 2015 Under the direction of Lindel M. Anderson, Dean of Music	Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave. Indianapolis, IN Host: Paul D. Mooney	Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenbush, Lindel Anderson, IBC Choir, IBC Chorale, IBC Praise, others	ibc@apostolic.edu www.go2ibc.com or call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069
APRIL 30- MAY 2	Eagles Summit Conference - Stockton, CA Eagles Summit is committed to birthing, empowering and equipping Apostolic leaders to build the Kingdom of God.	Lighthouse of the Valley 368 N. Sutter St. Stockton, CA 95204	Stan Gleason, Brian Kinsey and John Arcovio	For more info: visit www.eaglessummit.net
JUNE 25-27	INAAP Regional Training Center Empowering and equipping Apostolic leaders to build the Kingdom of God. Our vision is to align the Apostles and Prophets for the purpose of affirmation, awakening, aligning and activation.	New Life Center 840 Rouse St. Houston, TX 77020	Apostle John Arcovio, Apostle Amador Valensuela, and Prophet Mike East	For more info: visit www.spiritled.net , e-mail spiritledm@gmail.com , or call 888-776-0797
JULY 12-17	2015 Apostolic Leadership Institute The Apostolic Leadership Institute believes that those who attend should be rewarded with especially illuminated Oneness Pentecostal teaching about the most vital Bible truths.	Assumption College 500 Salisbury Street Worcester, MA 01609	Jimmie & Bobbie Shoemake, Clifford & Peggy Readout, Harry Scism, Levi Wright, Danny Aber, Sidney Poe, Thomas Dibble, John Harrison, Gary Evensen, Robert Carter, Lisa Dupuis, Gale Scott	For more info: visit www.apostolicleadership.com or call Thomas Dibble @203-232-1996
JULY 22-24	Mile High Conference 2015 Revival of Prayer, Praise and Evangelism	To be announced	To be announced	(303) 758-5900 www.cacdenver.org DEH2@comcast.net
JULY 2015	IMPACT Family Conference 2015 Day sessions to meet the needs of your entire family unit (Married, Single, Parents, Teens & Children) and your church leadership.	To be announced	To be announced	For detailed schedule, visit www.woodlawn-church.cc (601) 736-5128
AUG 2015	Arkansas Campmeeting - North Little Rock, AR A conference where Apostolic doctrine is not only preached but embraced. The message of Acts 2:38 remains the same!	First Pentecostal Church of North Little Rock, 1401 Calvary Dr., North Little Rock, AR Host Pastor: Joel Holmes	To be announced	For more info visit www.arkansascampmeeting.com
AUG 2015	Investing in Futures A conference for those who invest in children. Educating, encouraging and equipping children's ministry workers.	The Apostolic Sanctuary, 1501 John Deere Parkway, Silvis, IL 61239 Host Pastor: Gary Randol	To be announced	For more info: visit invest-in-futures.com
SEPT 2015	Apostolic Doctrine Conference Strengthening Our Doctrinal Foundation	To be announced	To be announced	For more info: www.newlifeterrehaute.com or 812-877-9348
Nov 2015	West Coast Conference - Fresno, CA 32nd Annual Fresno Meeting	To be announced	To be announced	For more information call: (559) 225-1622 www.truthtabfresno.org

Theology: The Debate About the “Right Hand of God”



Robert L. Rodenbush

■ Church Today

rlrodenbush@earthlink.net

Less Hell?

In her article entitled, “How do you sell God in the 21st century? More Heaven, less hell” (theguardian.com), Meghan O’Gieblyn discusses how the concept of hell has been rebranded in many evangelical churches. It has gone from a literal place of brimstone and fire to the less traditional, more seeker-friendly metaphorical journey of life on earth. The article mentions a marketing consultant who jokingly assigned himself the task of “rebranding hell.” Despite the levity of the assignment, the bubbled font and snappy slogans advertising hell as a great travel destination quickly went viral.

O’Gieblyn, a Moody Bible Institute alumnus and former Christian, goes on to lay out the case that the church has done its own watering down of the idea of hell. She attended the famed Willow Creek church during her college years and began to notice that she had never even heard anyone mention the concept. “According to Hybels [the pastor of Willow Creek], God’s love was not an unearned gift granted to sinners, but proof that we mattered on a cosmic scale. Our primary fault was not our sinful nature, but our tendency to think too little of ourselves. It took me several more visits before I realized what was off: I realized that I couldn’t recall anyone at Willow Creek ever mentioning sin, repentance or confession. I never once heard a reference to hell ... It goes without saying that pastors who are trying to ‘sell’ God won’t mention hell any more than a clothes ad will call attention to child labor. Under the new business model, hell became the sweatshop, the behind-the-scenes horror the consumer doesn’t want to know about. Once I became aware of what was missing at Willow Creek, it was almost a game to watch the ministers try to maneuver around the elephant in the room. One strategy was to place the focus on heaven, letting people mentally fill in the blank about the alternative. Another was to use contemporary, watered-down translations of the Bible, like The Message (reviled around Moody’s theology department, where it was better known as ‘The Mess’).”

We have entered an era in which Jonathan Edwards’ sermon “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” is practically considered hate speech. At the very least, convictive preaching and calling attention to biblical descriptions of hell certainly goes against the marketing and strategic growth plans of many of today’s churches. A recent article debunking the rapture made its rounds on the Internet blogosphere; apparently, it’s considered best practice to do away with all references to eternity whatsoever so as not to offend anyone. As our pulpits become more monitored and the legal ramifications to our speech more intense, I believe it is more important than ever to stay focused on our message. If we truly believe there is a hell, do we not disserve our congregations if we fail to mention it? There may be consequences to our proclaiming the truth, but the consequences of failure in this matter are eternal.



Bobby Killmon

■ Theology

bobby.killmon@sbcglobal.net

How do we explain best that the “right hand of God” is compatible with a Oneness view of God?

This is one of the most common mistakes made by Trinitarians reading scripture. Instead of asking how “right hand” language is used in the rest of the Bible they automatically assume that it is about space or geography. That’s because their view causes them to “see” things that are not there because it would be totally foreign to the original readers (the OT & NT saints) and writers of Scripture.

When the NT says Jesus sits or stands on the right hand of God (Acts 2:34 and others) it can’t be physical. First, because no man has seen God at any time (John 1:18; I Tim. 6:16; I John 4:12). If these verses are about disclosing a trinity, why do they only address two things, and why would Stephen ignore two of them, praying only to Jesus? (Acts 7:59-60). Verses like Acts 7:55 are misread. It does not say Stephen saw God but instead “the glory of God.” This refers to Jesus being in the place of power as Messiah, and this metaphor is not to be taken as literal geography.

A study of how the language of “right hand” is used in Scripture would quickly show this fallacy. In Psalm 16:8, David wrote, “I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.” Does this mean the LORD was always bodily present at David’s right hand? But then Psalm 109:31 says the LORD “shall stand at the right hand of the poor.” Where is He standing? One of my favorites is when the Bible says Jesus cast out devils by the finger of God (Luke 11:20). Did He pull down a giant finger from heaven and punch devils out of people? No! The “right hand of God” is figurative and not physical in a bodily sense.

Many have noted a growing number of Trinitarian scholars like V. Philips Long, Bernard Ramm, and others acknowledge this, too. Ramm says, “God’s almightiness is spoken of in terms of a right arm because among men the right arm is the symbol of strength or power. Pre-eminence is spoken of as sitting at God’s right hand because in human social affairs the right hand position with reference to the host was the place of greatest honor.” That means it’s not literal.

Also, when Scripture depicts heaven with only one throne and one on the throne, is the Father sitting on the one throne and Jesus standing by it? How do we make sense of Jesus being shown as the One seated on the throne? (Rev. 4:2, 8 with 1:8, 18) Trinitarians admit this language is frustrating. James MacDonald said, “I believe the Scripture is clear when we get to heaven, we are gonna see Jesus... Jesus is the only God we will ever see. When studying Revelation last year I was struck by... the number of times I saw it almost seems in the text the Father and Son are on the same throne... I believe in God eternally existing in 3 persons. But, the more I think of it, the more I think my head is going to explode...” That’s why many are admitting Jesus on the right hand must be figurative or symbolic.

Reading second and third century philosophy into the scripture is wrong. But making sense of the way this language is used in the whole of the Bible shows Oneness right. The language of “right hand” is about Jesus the man operating as Messiah and King.



T. W. Massengale

■ Church Growth

tmassengale@apostolic.edu

Getting a Response

We live in a communication-saturated society. Primarily we have the internet to thank for this. But regardless whether this is good, bad or both, the truth remains – people want to have access to information about your church, the ministries it offers and the opportunity to ask questions. The best way to gather information is a response card in your guest packet.

Guest packets are important. They tell your guests what your church has to offer. Most of what your church provides in the way of ministries is not seen from a visit or two. So your guest packet should provide this

information and also provide a response card for the following:

Contact Information: Name, address, email, phone number and more should be requested since this information is critical for effective follow-up. The best way to gather this is to have a hostess greet them in the church foyer before they enter the sanctuary. The hostess will give them their guest packet and, with clipboard in hand, say, “The pastor would love to know you better. Would you mind if I got your names?” After writing down their names, she then says, “We would also love to add you to our mailing list to inform you of future special events. Would you mind if we got your mailing address?” Having your hostess ask for contact information ensures that you will get the most responses possible.

Feedback: The hostess should point out there is a response card within the packet.

This provides guests with the opportunity to tell you about their experience at your church. Here they can request a home Bible study, a meeting with the pastor, or food assistance from your benevolence pantry. They can also share if they felt the church was friendly.

Prayer Requests: Many are quite comfortable with sharing needs with the church prayer team. Every request should be acknowledged either by letter or email. You should also ask if you can check back after 30 days to see if the church should continue praying. Such contacts make good opportunities for setting up a home Bible study.

Salvation: People visit churches for a reason. Many are fully aware they are not right with God and desire to turn their lives around.

While this column is addressing guest packets, all this information should be a part of your website as well.

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Restoring Our Focus On What Matters Most

When programs, ideas, agendas, and methods
become our source of confidence,
it's time for a reset.

When hurts and hopes, questions and chaos
maim our ability to minister,
it's time for a reset.

When we feel we have lost our way, because
life or ministry seasons change,
it's time for a reset.

Reset restores the original settings
of our salvation and calling.

Reset brings clarity and calm
in the midst of every storm.

Reset focuses our attention on the
One Who matters most.

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Carol Clemans

Spiritual Growth

carol@carolclemans.org

What You Do Matters Forever

Edward Lorenz presented a hypothesis in 1963 that a butterfly could flap its wings and set molecules of air in motion, which would move other molecules of air, in turn moving more molecules of air--eventually capable of changing the weather on the other side of the planet (*The Butterfly Effect* by Andy Andrews). A 30-year study by physics professors came to the conclusion that the butterfly effect was authentic, accurate and viable.

God is the creator of the butterfly effect in creation, in His coming in the flesh as Jesus Christ and dying on the cross for our sins. By His crucifixion, His blood still washes away our sins 2,000 years later. The Bible teaches that whatever we do should reflect the glory of God, and we should do everything as unto the Lord.

Andrews wrote, "You have been created in order that you might make a difference. You have within you the power to change the world." Through my writing articles for this column for 10 years, God has allowed my life to touch thousands of lives nationwide and from other countries in teaching, counseling and writing God's truth that gives hope and healing to hurting hearts.

We are created in the image of God. We all have a purpose in life. It might not seem grand to you, but what you do does affect everyone around you. Those lives you touch will touch others. What we say and do will be revealed in eternity. I want God to use my "butterfly effect" to touch others and multiply through them for the glory of God!

Carol Clemans is a Certified Pastoral Counselor/anointed Bible teacher for churches/conferences. She provides nationwide confidential counseling by phone/Skype - (636) 448-0121. www.carolclemans.org - bio, 100+ articles, teaching CD's & DVD's, book: "God's Design for Marriage." Revs. Harold & Carol Clemans' pastor is Bishop Jerry Dillon, Madison, MS.



Brian Norman

Revival Concepts

evangelistnorman@gmail.com

The House of Prayer

"It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Luke 19:46).

Prayer is a central part of who we as Christians are. Nothing else says more about WHO we trust and deity than WHO we pray to, and how MUCH we pray to them. There are a buffet of good ideas regarding how to instigate revival and church growth, many of them with some degree of merit. Yet none compare or have any power, absent of prayer behind and beneath them.

It has been said, "Where there is much prayer there is much power" (unnamed). Absent of a personal prayer revival on the part of a church's members there can be no real Biblical revival and subsequent Biblical results in that congregation. Oh, but when we pray! Prayer changes our situations, and it changes us in our situations. Nothing else brings renewing, reviving, hope, faith and fresh vision like a good ol' praying through, followed up with a daily, consistent diet of prayer. E.M. Bounds said, "Prayer projects faith on God, and God on the world."

Before Adam could be commissioned with the mission to reach his world, he had to be "blessed" (Gen. 1:28). Can we expect any less in order to reach ours? If we are to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" we have to already be blessed before we begin (Gen. 1:28).

What better place is there to be blessed and stay blessed than prayer?

With that in mind, let us begin 2015 with our own personal prayer revival, and ask the same of those who labor with us and that we have the privilege to lead. For only in prayer can something be birthed in us and in our midst that will radically change our world. Absent of it, we are at best going through the motions, finding ourselves guilty of "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3:5). Let it not be said of any Apostolic.

Brian Norman is a full-time International Evangelist. His experience includes pastoring and planting churches in America and overseas. Website: GlobalEvangelism.org Phone: (636) 544-0627



Aubrey Jayroe

Finance

jayroeone@sbcglobal.net

I understand that there was a court ruling several months ago that questioned the constitutionality of the clergy housing allowance. Has anything transpired regarding the clergy housing?

Yes. A judge in Wisconsin declared the clergy housing as unconstitutional several months ago. Fortunately, however, this has changed.

The decision was appealed, and just recently the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the lower court's ruling that the clergy housing allowance was an unconstitutional preference for religion, thus continuing to allow the housing allowance for qualified ministers.

While this does appear to be a victory for all the ministers who utilize the housing allowance, there could be future challenges to this law.

Presently, a church should declare the housing allowance each year in a written document with a stipulated amount to be allowed for the housing. This will allow the qualifying minister to reduce his overall taxable income by the allowed housing allowance.

Just a reminder, the housing allowance is not taxable to income tax; however, it is subject to self-employment tax unless the minister has been approved to be exempt from paying self-employment taxes. The minister who is exempt must have an approved Form 4361 to secure the exemption.

Aubrey L. Jayroe is an Accredited Tax Advisor, Accredited Tax Preparer and Enrolled Agent by the IRS, as well as an Apostolic pastor. Contact him at: (870) 633-6045. Jayroe & Company, P.O. Box 1217, Forrest City, AR 72336. Email: jayroeone@sbcglobal.net



Delano Sherley

Accounting & Tax

Reimbursing Expenses (Part 3)

Continuing the topic of "accountable reimbursement plan" rules when reimbursing business expenses:

Proper documentation is a key requirement for any expense that an employee charges to a church debit/credit card or requests to be reimbursed for. This would include meals and entertainment expenses. The employee should document who was present, the business purpose of the meeting, and a general description of

what was discussed.

Often, rather than requesting reimbursement for business expenses such as meals, mileage, study materials, etc., the pastor instead opts to write off the expenses on his tax return as an "unreimbursed business expense" (form 2106). While this is an option, consider the following:

First, the deduction is reduced by 2% of the minister's adjusted gross income. Thus, someone with an AGI of \$50,000 would automatically lose \$1,000 of the deduction. The deduction is further reduced by the percentage of non-taxable income (housing allowance) to total income.

Assuming someone is in a 15% tax bracket, the tax savings is 15% of the remaining deduction after the reductions above. The full amount of the deduction without any reductions reduces the amount of self-employment income.

I have seen what could have resulted in \$8,400 of reimbursement to the pastor turn into a tax savings of only \$1,400. Contact us if you would like a review of your personal scenario.

Delano Sherley is a CPA and president of Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc. He can be reached at 513-737-1314. Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc., 3189 Princeton Road, Suite 228, Hamilton, OH 45011. Email: Delano@dsacpainsc.com Website: www.dsacpainsc.com

THAT'S OUTRAGEOUS**Canadian Law Society Refuses to Accept Christian Law Grads**

The governing board of the Law Society of British Columbia decided recently not to admit graduates of Trinity Western University's proposed law school, reversing an earlier decision to accept the alumni. The about-face came after the society's member attorneys voted overwhelmingly to shut out the Christian



school's graduates.

Trinity Western spokesman Guy Saffold said the university is disappointed in the decision but will not end plans for the law school. Trinity Western University, located in Langley, B.C. in metro Vancouver, is Canada's largest Christian university. The school requires all students to sign a covenant outlining expected conduct, including a promise to abstain from "sexual intimacy that violates the sacredness of marriage between a man and a woman." The Canadian Bar Association opposed TWU's accreditation, claiming the school's belief in traditional marriage made it incapable of training students to uphold Canadian law, particularly since same-sex marriage has been legal in Canada since 2005.

RELIGIOUS TRENDS**Football Coach Fired For Refusing to Stop Team Members From Praying**

A public school football coach claims he was terminated from his position for allowing players at Catalina Foothills High School in Tucson, Arizona to pray before and after games. Gary Weiss said he was given an ultimatum by school officials: tell players to stop praying or lose his position. "My concern is the rights of the kids to do what is their right to do," Weiss told KVOA-TV.

District administrators said that voluntary prayer is permitted, but that staff members cannot facilitate or promote student invocations. The central question is whether Weiss was guilty of organizing or supporting prayers among team members — something the coach denies, claiming that no adults led the invocations. Weiss also said that the prayers were inclusive.

"The prayers of the freshmen team have been recited by Muslim kids, Jewish kids, and Christian kids," Weiss said. He is reportedly no longer permitted on school property.

**Contrasts Between American and Biblical Christianity**

It has been evident to Biblical scholars that often believers interpret the Bible through the lens of their culture. This has resulted in many beliefs, doctrines and practices prevalent in the church that are not in accord with the clear teaching of Scripture. Sometimes in the U.S. pulpit, preaching can come across more like the "American Dream" than sound, biblical teaching.

1. *American Christianity focuses on individual destiny.* The Bible focuses on corporate vision and destiny. Most of the preaching in today's pulpits in America focuses on individual destiny, purpose and vision. However, a quick look at the Bible shows us that in the Old Testament the emphasis was always on the nation of Israel, and in the New Testament the emphasis was always on the church. Every promise of God in Scripture was given to the community of faith as a whole.

2. *American Christianity focuses on individual prosperity.* The Bible focuses on stewardship. Much American preaching today focuses on "our rights in Christ" to be blessed. However, in Scripture the emphasis regarding finances has to do with being blessed by God in order to be a blessing by bringing God's covenant to the Earth.

3. *American Christianity focuses on self-fulfillment and happiness.* The Bible focuses on glorifying God and serving humanity. The Great Commandments are to love God and love our neighbor. Much of the focus from the American pulpit has to do with individual fulfillment and satisfaction.

4. *American Christianity appeals to using faith to attain stability and comfort.* The Bible encourages believers to risk life and limb to advance the Kingdom. Much of the preaching in American churches regarding faith has to do with using faith so we can have a nice car, home, job, financial security and comfort.

6. *American believers have a consumerist mentality regarding a home church.* The biblical emphasis is being equipped for the ministry. Americans shop for a church today based on what meets their personal and family needs the best. It is almost like a supermarket mentality of one-stop shopping.

7. *American Christianity promotes a culture of entertainment.* The Bible promotes the pursuit of God. In the typical growing American church, there will be an incredible worship team, visual effects and great oratory. Biblically speaking, some of the greatest examples we have of intimacy with God come from the Psalms in which the writers were in dire straits, with no worship team, and alone somewhere in the desert.

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Two public elementary schools in Texas have covered dedication plaques that referenced God with duct tape after a complaint from the Freedom From Religion Foundation. The Midlothian Independent School District confirmed the plaques had been covered temporarily and will eventually be replaced with dedication plaques that do not reference religion.

■ Arkansas State University conceded it made a grievous constitutional error when ordering its football players to remove a memorial sticker of a cross from their helmets honoring two team members tragically killed in the past year. The decision came after the school received more than 25,000 emails opposing religious discrimination.

RELIGIOUS TRENDS**Chaplains Replaced by "Life Coaches" at FL School**

As students returned to one school in Florida, there was a glaring omission. Chaplains for the Olympia High School football team in Orange County, Florida, were replaced with "life coaches" after the school caved in to pressure from an anti-religion group. One former chaplain, Troy Schmidt, reported

to Fox News that he could "no longer open the Bible, talk about the Bible, talk about God or pray with the team in any capacity. It was heartbreaking."

Schmidt was offered the role of "life coach" but was warned he would not be able to use any inspiration from the Bible when motivating players. Schmidt turned down the position, stating, "That's not me. My heroes come from the Bible, and I think there is a lot of inspiration in there that can motivate a football player to get out on the field and play their best and be their best."

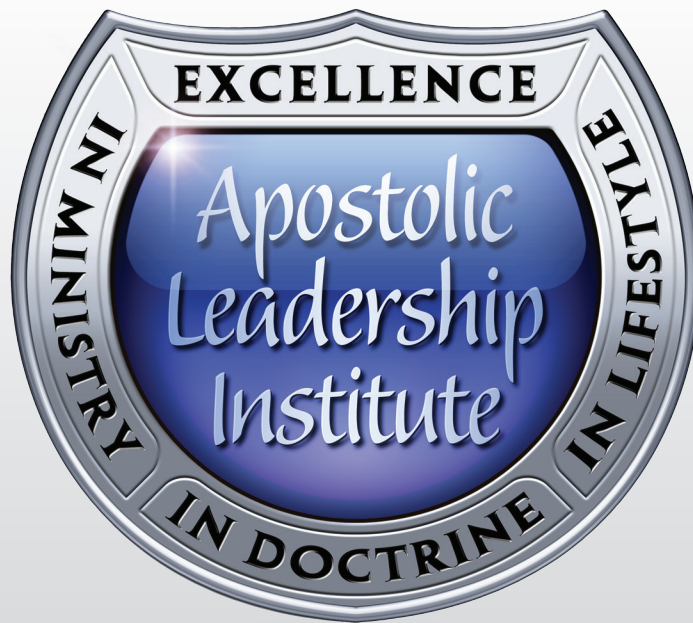
A spokesperson for the Orange County Schools confirmed the district has ended the long-standing tradition of having local ministers serve as volunteer chaplains for football teams, adding that students can lead their own prayers, but faculty, staff or voluntary chaplains cannot participate in a visible way with the players during student-led prayers.

Bible verses and references to the Bible have also been banned on school property, and songs with religious lyrics may not be used in school-related videos. The actions are in response to a threat from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

**LEGAL TRENDS****Federal Court Allows Ten Commandments Monument**

A Ten Commandments monument in Fargo, North Dakota does not violate the U.S. Constitution's Establishment Clause as it serves more as a historical display than a religious one, the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled recently. The court noted there were both sacred and secular reasons behind the monument's establishment, and that it contained more than just Christian text, such as an American flag and an "all seeing eye" pyramid.

The monument had been donated over 50 years ago by the Fraternal Order of Eagles and sits in Fargo's Civic Plaza, a public location in the city. Since 2002, the Red River Freethinkers have been fighting against the presence of the monument, asserting that it serves as a government endorsement of Christianity. The group is now considering whether to appeal the matter to the United States Supreme Court.



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Transcribed by Linda Schreckenberger



THE INFLU- ENCE OF TRUTH ON THOU- GHT

The boldness of our culture

I would like you to consider the influence of truth on our thought or thinking patterns. What I find dangerous in our society is that this present culture takes full liberties with your mind and brain, and they make no apologies for it. They cross what we believe about Biblical truth and righteousness, and they have no second thought about what they do or say. But, when we say things that cross the world, one says, "Why do you think you have the right to say that?" They use any vehicle of entertainment and education to communicate to this world what they want this world to think or to be, and they never make apologies for it.

Relinquishing our choices

In Proverbs 23:7, it says, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." You are not what you think you are. You are actually a composite of what you think, what is constantly in the mind and mindset of what you are. I find it strange that so many times people relinquish the freedom of choice over to habit or to character.

Character, whether good or bad, is defined by the human spirit. Pharaoh relinquished over to his habit, not realizing just how cruel or how evil he was to the people of God. He had relinquished the power of his own choosing over to the habit of what he was.

When people's lives are messed up, they feel they are being punished in life. A man has to wake up to life and realize, "I want to be what I ought to be. I want to think how I ought to think." Our thought world feeds and shapes the people that we are.

It's not a brain issue at all

The Word of God never mentions the brain, but it refers to the mind 95 times. Our brain is not the issue. The issue is our mind. The brain has preconceived ideas, knowledge and understanding. Your brain says, "The sun rises, bringing light to our world, and the sun sets, bringing darkness to our world." This is how the brain views and understands, but the brain itself is in error, because the sun does not rise or set. Your brain considers something to be fact, whether it is or not. It is from that concept that thoughts come, and the mind takes its shape.

Philippians 2:5 says, "Let this mind that was in Christ Jesus be in you." He did not say, "Let this brain that was in Jesus be in you." It's not a brain issue; it's a mind issue. Pictures referring to the mind are always pictures of a brain, because there are no pictures of the mind.

It's not in a high IQ

The religion of materialism says this, "If you cannot weigh it, measure it, or see it in a microscope, it really doesn't exist." There is no way to weigh a mind or put it under a microscope. People think having the brain, the intelligence, or a high IQ is the answer to the problems of our world. I know people with a high IQ who are likely to die without God, yet after hearing truth will still die without God. I know others who have a moderate IQ and turn out to be some of the greatest workers in the Kingdom of God.

The function of the brain is to gather information

Your brain receives information from the nervous system and the constant flow of information around it. It says, "I'm not interested in what is reality, true or false, right or wrong." The mind then has to take what it is given and begin to process it. The brain expands and grows in a unique process. It is powerful, yet limited. The brain reaches out and grabs everything that comes by, but it is the mind that pulls it together. Your brain crunches data and puts it within the reach of the mind, but the brain does not decide if the data is true.

Moses sees the burning bush, but the bush is not being consumed! It is still living. Moses says, "I will turn aside to see this great sight." His brain is saying something that is contradicting what his mind is seeing or sensing. Moses then hears the voice of God speaking to his mind. There is a brain situation here. Moses' brain is grasping something that is happening, and yet his mind is

saying, "No, this is not understandable."

The brain has no feeling at all, so it is the mind that processes our senses. The mind has no size or shape, and yet, we all have a mind. If you were to take a radio and smash it, you will have eliminated the connection to the voice on the radio, but you haven't eliminated the waves. You've only lost the substance that grasps the sounds and categorizes them.

The Apostle Paul never told us we need the brain that was in Christ Jesus. The mind is the part of what life is all about.

The Spirit of God overrides a programmed brain

You don't believe in one God, because it is in your brain. You believe in one God, because you have a mind that reaches out and lays hold of truth. Someone spoke the scripture to you, and that word flowed into your mind. You then began to experience God.

Mark 16:16 says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." To believe something, you have to have something there to believe. The religious world discounts the validity of truth or scripture, and the secular world is saying there is no God or any god is ok. They're saying the Bible isn't true, and the Bible is not God's Word, so it's not such an issue. The mind says, "So what am I to believe? What about any god? What about no god? What about any morals, what about no morals? What about any religion, what about no religion? The mind then takes its free will to go and to do what it wants to do. Apostolic preachers must tell this world about truth, because it influences the mind in a way that nothing else does.

Your DNA doesn't dictate what you are

One cell of your DNA can be a microscopic size and yet contain the entire makeup of what you are. Our culture today says, "This is what you are, and you can't help it, because your DNA has dictated what you are." DNA only gives you tendencies, but men believe because that tendency is in the brain, they must be this sexual orientation or behavior. Your DNA does not dictate what you are. Television and Hollywood program your brain to think you can't be any different than what you are. The mind then says, "I am what I am, leave me be."

Those who walk into churches have been programmed to believe what their brain has said. "I can't help but be an alcoholic ... I can't help but be immoral." And we are able to say, "That's in your brain, but you can have a different mind." Romans 12:1 says, "I beseech ye, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, and be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing (or renovation) of your mind." Your brain is just your brain, but you can have a mindset like the mindset of Jesus Christ.

The transformation of the mind by the Spirit

When the Spirit of God begins to move on a person for the first time, they are unaccustomed to it, and their brain is uneasy. Their thought process doesn't understand, but at the same time, the Spirit of God's truth influences their mind to believe. It brings a clash in what their brain is saying and yet their mind has been touched by the Spirit of God. They feel something they've never felt and hear something they've never heard.

The call of Abraham

The call of Abraham verifies what I am saying. "Now the Lord God said unto Abram, Get out of your country, get away from your kindred, get away from your father's house . . . I want you to go somewhere I will show you, because I want to tell you who I am and what I can do for you. I can make you a great nation. I want you to understand that I can bless you, and through your seed, the nations will be blessed." God did not say He was going to change Ur of the Chaldeans. God had no intention of changing the Chaldean world. He was going to change the mind of a man named Abram. God is not going to change America, but he's going to change people, and they are going to affect

America.

The concept of the swamp gods

The concept of the Babylonian world was that there was no creation like Genesis says. They believed in earth and sky gods and in a divine swamp, from which swamp gods emerged. They believed Marduk, the earth god, did battle with the female swamp god, Tiamat. Marduk killed her in a huge net, cut her carcass into two pieces and suspended her between the earth and the heavens. Her blood dripped into the swamp, and from the mud of the swamp came forth human beings to populate the earth. This was the concept of Abram's world around him, but God called him out of that world and revealed himself to Abram.



**Bishop William E. Davis Jr.
Macon, GA**

Changing the pre-set mind of man

The salvation process is not the changing of the world, but the changing of the mind. Culture has determined the course we are on. When you send kids to secular colleges, within a year they almost doubt there is a God. The world around us has made a war against the power of truth. There are two things the mind wants for itself: 1) The human mind wants to enjoy life each day, fulfill its demands, meet its challenges and yet have some joy and pleasure each day. 2) There is an essence of the mind that says, "I want to transcend this. I keep getting these vibes there is something better out there."

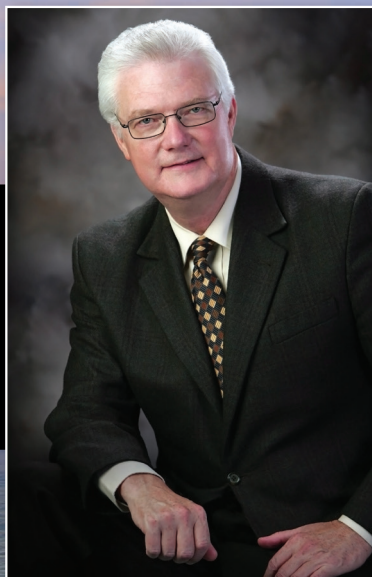
This world is communication friendly

This world was created for communication with the unseen, the unknown. They say we send a signal. What is a signal? How big? What is its shape? The Creator has created this world to be communication friendly, but their brain says it is for the cell phone or the computer. This world was not created for that but for us to pray, think of, worship, love and magnify God. II Corinthians 10:4-5 says, "For the weapons of our warfare (our conflict or warring) are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down (utterly demolishing) of strong holds; Casting down imaginations (not casting out devils), and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge (what I know) of God, and bringing into captivity every *thought* to the obedience of Christ..." This is not a war that people have with demons and devils and forces from the regions of the damned. This is the war that goes on in the mind of every man, woman and child in the world every day of their lives. There is always a conflict of imaginations and thoughts. We must go to war with spiritual weapons to pull down every thought that is against God. We should never apologize for preaching truth. The world never apologizes up front for the garbage they are bringing to you in a movie. They want to get in your head and into your mind.

We have something to preach to this generation that will change their preset brains and move them from the swamp gods to the one true God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Almighty! It is a fact that what we say to them allows the Spirit of God to change their entire thought processes, even though their brain has been programmed entirely differently. The tasting of the Spirit and hearing of truth changes everything in the mind.

Bio: Bishop Davis and his wife, Greta, have three children and six grandchildren. He is founder, bishop and overseer of The World of Faith church in Macon, GA where his son, Trey Davis, pastors. He has served 22 years as Presbyter on the Board of the District of Georgia, ministers in conferences and camp meetings, and has written 10 books. This sermon was preached at the 2007 Steadfast Conference and is also available through the church website <http://www.theworldoffaith.org/>

Note: A portion of the research for this sermon was taken from the book by Gerald Schroeder, titled The Science of God.



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A Modern Day Miracle

Sunday School Teacher Collapses at Church Picnic, Raised From the Dead

By Linda Schreckenberg

It was just an ordinary Labor Day church picnic in the park for the First Pentecost Church in New Madrid, Missouri. However, this picnic was about to become far from ordinary. It would be a day that Sis. Wilma Barker, a Sunday school teacher since 1967, would never forget. Her pastor, Gary L. Keene Jr., said she was his teacher when he was five years old.

He explained the unique series of events on that special Labor Day. "Sis. Barker was eating her meal at the picnic when she began to feel nauseous," said

Bro. Keene. "She turned to a lady and asked for a cool cloth. They called for me, and we began to move her from the table to a chair, when she suddenly went limp. There was a gurgle in her throat, a breath, and she was gone. She had not

been ill or had any medical condition we were aware of."

He continued, "We leaned her back, and I saw that her eye was fixed. Having worked at a funeral home over the years,

I knew immediately that Sis. Barker had died. Maria Allen, a saint and a registered nurse for years, checked Sis. Barker for signs of life and found no pulse and no sign of life. She started to do CPR but realized Sis. Barker was dead. She turned to Sis. Barker's daughter and said, 'She's gone!'

"Not wanting her daughter to see her eyes, I placed my hand over her face and began to pray in tongues. Bro. Eugene Dominguez, missionary to Peru, began to pray with me. Everyone was praying in tongues, and the power of God was very

strong. Suddenly, she began to come back to life. She couldn't see us at that point, but said she heard the prayers going up as she came back. She didn't have any after-death memories that she remembers, but attests to the fact that God brought her back from the dead. Sis. Barker was taken to the ER for precautionary measures. Vials of blood were drawn and tested, the hospital found nothing, and she hasn't had any problems since. At least fifty people, including church members and guests, witnessed this miracle.

"Bro. Brian Norman preached for us the next weekend. And he shared the story. Many saw it on Facebook, and someone mentioned the story to a reporter. KFVS Channel 12 sent the reporter to interview Sis. Barker," Bro. Keene said. "They came to us. We didn't go to them. In fact, I spoke with the interviewer after the interview to make sure the church would not be portrayed in any negative way whatsoever, and she sent the script to me for approval. Sis. Barker is a very shy, humble lady, and that is evident by the KFVS video clip. God gave us a miracle!"



Sis. Wilma Barker and Pastor Gary L. Keene Jr.
First Pentecost Church, New Madrid, MO

Perhaps It's Time for "Something More"

New Testament Plan of Salvation Outlined in Unique Comic Book Format

By Gregg Stone



Bro. Byron Black, author
Fort Wayne, IN

Have you ever felt like something was missing, like there just had to be more? It's a concept that has been around since the beginning of time. On the Day of Pentecost, the onlookers asked the disciples, "What must we do to be saved?"

They were looking for that "something more."

Even today, people are asking that same question. Bro. Byron Black, with Abundant Life Church in Fort Wayne, IN, has developed a new and exciting way to share the New Testament plan of salvation: in comic book form. "I've had a longtime interest in cartooning and comic books," explains Bro. Black. "Several years ago I was praying and seeking some direction in which I could use my talents. I felt strongly impressed to do a tract

in this format, especially since I wasn't aware of anything like this having been done relevant to Apostolic Pentecostal doctrine."

Something More is a web-based tract, and a new website for it has been launched without the intrusiveness of advertising. Also available through the site is a file for printing hard copies of the tract. "The art and commentary notes were done by me, the latter being influenced by teaching and preaching that has particularly impacted me over the years," said Bro. Black. "Hard copies of the tract are not available from me. However, a PDF file at the end of the online tract can be downloaded for printing multiple, pocket-sized copies. Although this is copyrighted work, printing and distributing this tract is permitted, provided it is made freely available and no alterations to the content are made."

The tract is available through the

website, <http://somethingmoreinjesus.weebly.com/>. Bro. Black encourages anyone that is interested to share it via Facebook, Twitter or any other means.





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Word To The Wise:

"If you look like your passport picture, you probably need the vacation!"

* * * * *

The End of the Road

A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office. "Is it true," she wanted to know, "that the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her.

There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious my condition is because this prescription is marked 'NO REFILLS'!"

* * * * *

The minister was preoccupied with thoughts of how he was going to, at the end of the worship service, ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. Therefore, he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was sick and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play.

"Here's a copy of the service," the minister said impatiently. "But you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances."

During the service, the minister paused and said, "Brothers and sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected, and we need \$4,000 more. Any of you who can pledge \$100 or more, please stand up."

At that moment, the substitute organist played "The Star-Spangled Banner."

And that is how the substitute became the regular.



"Besides calling every Sunday 'Easter,' does anyone else have ideas for improving church attendance?"

A Jewish rabbi and a Catholic priest met at the town's annual picnic. Old friends, they began their usual banter.

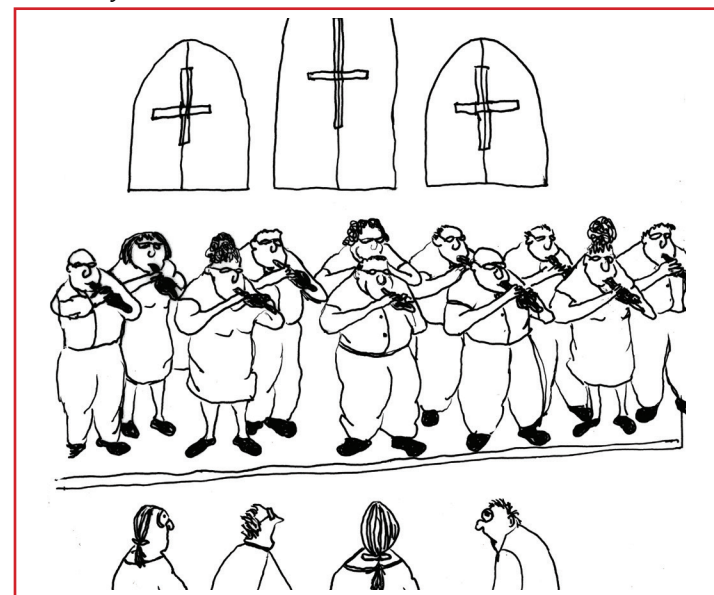
"This baked ham is really delicious," the priest teased the rabbi. "You really ought to try it. I know it's against your religion, but I can't understand why such a wonderful food should be forbidden! You don't know what you're missing. You just haven't lived until you've tried Mrs. Hall's prized Virginia Baked Ham. Tell me, Rabbi, when are you going to break down and try it?"

The rabbi looked at the priest with a big grin and said, "At your wedding."

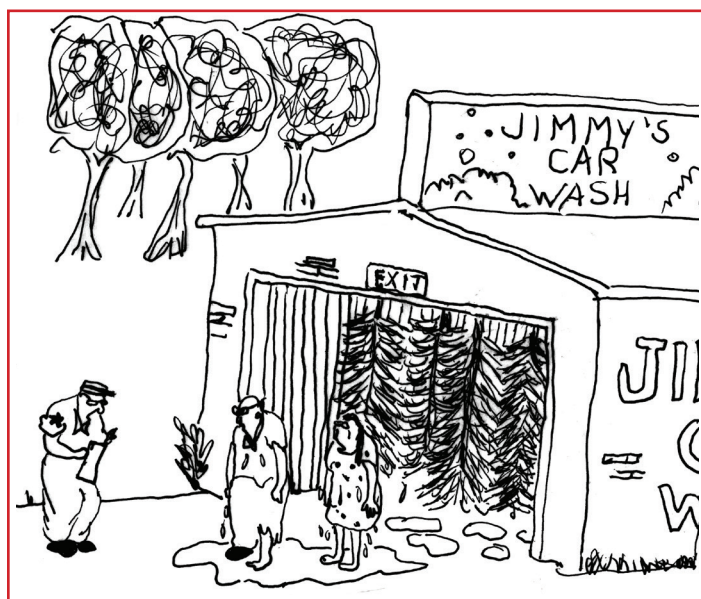
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GRANDPARENTS - as defined by children

- Grandparents are a lady and a man who have no little children of their own. They like other people's.
- A grandfather is a man grandmother.
- Grandparents don't have to do anything except be there when we come to see them. They are so old they shouldn't play hard or run. It is good if they drive us to the store and have lots of quarters for us.
- They don't say, "Hurry up."
- Usually grandmothers are fat, but not too fat to tie your shoes.
- They wear glasses and funny underwear.
- Grandparents don't have to be smart.
- Everybody should try to have a grandmother because she is the only grown-up who likes to spend time with us.
- They know we should have snack-time before bedtime.
- They kiss us even when we've acted bad.



Unable to afford to repair the organ, First Church tries an all-kazoo praise band.



"So you're claiming your car was raptured and you were left behind?"

After years of scrimping and saving, a husband told his wife the good news: "Honey, we've finally saved enough money to buy what we started saving for way back in 2001."

"You mean a brand-new Cadillac?" she asked eagerly.

"No," he replies, "a 2001 Cadillac."

* * * * *

First guy: "I'm really in the doghouse. I ran afoul of one of those trick questions women ask."

Second guy: "What kind of question?"

First guy: "She asked me if I would still love her when she was old, fat and ugly."

Second guy: "That's easy. You just say, 'Of course I will.'"

First guy: "Yeah, that's what I meant to say. But what came out was, 'Of course I do.'"



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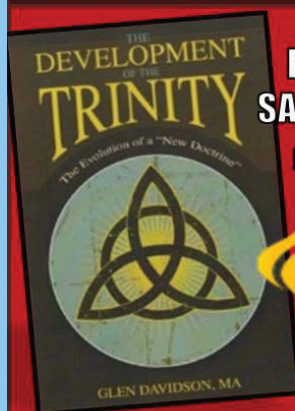
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