

October 2020

Editor, Keith Sharp

Designer, William Stewart



- unless otherwise noted, answers to questions by Keith Sharp -

In This Issue...

- **Questions from India**
- **Question About Marrying an Unbeliever**
- **ZOOM** | *Keith Sharp*
- **Was the Scapegoat a Type of Christ** | *Patrick Donahue*
- **The History of the Institutional Controversy (Part 7)** | *Jefferson David Tant*
- **Teaching In Song** | *William Stewart*
- **Encouraging Our Women** | *Mike Thomas*
- **What Was the Purpose of Miracles? (Part 2)** | *Julius C. Nwankwo*
- **Raising Money for the Lord's Work: How and by Whom? (1)** | *O. Lesley Egharevba*
- **The Road That We Chose** | *Pat Andrews*

Finally, brethren

WHATEVER THINGS

are true
are noble
are just
are pure
are lovely
are of good report

PHILIPPIANS
4:8

IF THERE IS ANY VIRTUE AND IF THERE IS ANYTHING PRAISEWORTHY –
meditate on these things.

Jim Mickells is recovering from Covid19 and unable to write this month. Please keep him in your prayers.

You can download this month's Meditate On These Things as a PDF file by clicking [here](#). Also, an archive of past MOTT issues is available at christistheway.com.

Questions from India

Question

Brother, I have a few questions for your kind replies. They are 1. God is providing healing, safe travels, fruit of womb, Good Success in life equally both Christians and non Christians. Then why should we pray for those things if God is providing those to the people who never prays as well?

Answer

The question you pose has troubled the Lord's people for thousands of years. The patriarch Job voiced his quandary:

"Why do the wicked live and become old, Yes, become mighty in power? Their descendants are established with them in their sight, And their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, Neither is the rod of God upon them. Their bull breeds without failure; Their cow calves without miscarriage. They send forth their little ones like a flock, And their children dance. They sing to the tambourine and harp, And rejoice to the sound of the flute. They spend their days in wealth, And in a moment go down to the grave. Yet they say to God, 'Depart from us, For we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways. Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit do we have if we pray to Him?'" (Job 21:7-15)

Asaph was a Levite who served as a musician in the Temple during the reign of King David. He wrote:

"But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious

of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no pangs in their death, But their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, Nor are they plagued like other men” (Psalm 73:2-7).

He answered his own problem when he explained:

“When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me— Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end” (Psalm 73:16-17).

I cannot prove to you by my experiences that God hears and answers the prayers of His children. I have had many troubles, far more than many who live wicked lives. As Asaph, we must “consider their end.”

As David, I believe:

“This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles” (Psalm 34:6).

The only proof that I can give that God hears and answers the prayers of His saints is His promise to do so. “For the eyes of the “Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil” (1 Peter 3:12).

It is a matter of faith in the Lord and in His word. The Lord taught a parable to instruct us “that men always ought to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1-8). He concluded by inquiring, “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8) Prayer is the ultimate expression of faith in the life of the Christian. The only proof I can give that God hears and answers the prayers of His children is that He promises to do so. If we walk by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7), that is all the reason we need.

Question

Demons possess now a days as well? If not what about so called demon possession cases people often argue with us?

Answer

The prophet Zechariah foretold that demon possession would cease at the same time prophecy ceased (Zechariah 13:1-2). Prophecy has ceased (1 Corinthians 13:8-13), therefore demon possession has ceased.

Question About Marrying an Unbeliever

Question

In my study of 2 Cor 6 regarding the question of what an "unequal yoke" refers to, I noticed that you took the stance that it wasn't about marriage to an unbeliever and that marrying an unbeliever is not a sin. Do you still hold to this view?

Answer

Thanks for the inquiry.

I do not believe 2 Corinthians 6:14 - 7:1 (the entire context) is about marriage to an unbeliever per se, but it can apply. Marriage is not mentioned in the context, but the passage is a general command not to be in an unequal relationship with unbelievers (6:14). We are in such a relationship if we are, by this relationship, caused to participate in “filthiness of the flesh or spirit” (7:1).

The passage does not say not to enter such a relationship but not to be in one (6:14). Thus, if it teaches it is a sin to marry an unbeliever, it teaches it is a sin to remain married to an unbeliever. But in his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul commands Christians married to unbelievers not to leave them (7:12-13).

The passage forbids Christians to remain in any relationship that causes them to share in the sins of an unbeliever. It is sinful to be in a business partnership with a swindler and share in his illicit gains. If marrying a Catholic means agreeing to raise the children to be Catholics, it is sinful to marry the Catholic.

Marriage is the closest of all earthly ties (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5-6; Ephesians 5:31). We should choose as our closest companions those who will help us go to heaven (1 Corinthians 15:33). Thus, I strongly urge Christians to marry, not just someone who wears the name "Christian," but someone who is truly dedicated to the Lord.

I do not believe one can prove it is a sin to marry an unbeliever. But there is what is "well" and what is "better" (1 Corinthians 7:38).

ZOOM

Keith Sharp | Mountain Home, Arkansas, USA

Before March of this year, I don't think I had ever heard of ZOOM. Now this web program has become an important part of my life. For about six weeks I worshiped on the first day of the week exclusively by what I could receive over the internet from William Stewart and the Limestone Church of Christ in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. During this time Michelle Sharp figured out how to use ZOOM to teach children's classes online, and she and Sandy now conduct three classes a week for children here and in Conway, New York City, and Kingston, Ontario, Canada. Manny Ebong in Lagos, Nigeria is preaching to congregations in London, England and Melbourne, Australia, and he and I are having classes with a young man in London.1 Wow! A year ago who could have imagined it!

But technology is morally and spiritually neutral. it can be used for good or bad. And, it can allow new ways for Satan to lead the unwary astray. We must not be ignorant of his devices (2 Corinthians 2:11; cf. Ephesians 6:11; 1 Peter 5:8).

It's a lot easier to sit at home in our pajamas and watch a TV program than it is to get dressed and go to the church building for an hour or two of worship. But we are commanded to assemble with the people of God for worship (Hebrews 10:24-25).

The same consideration that would lead me to stay at home if I am sick so as not to infect others (Hebrews 13:1), directs me to stay at home when the government warns that being together in crowds is spreading a deadly disease. But, when civil rulers allow bars and casinos to be open and decree churches must close, religious persecution has begun, and "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Some brethren have used the fear of covid19 and the use of modern technology to introduce unauthorized practices. New Testament Christians observed the Lord's Supper in the public worship assembly of the church exclusively (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:18, 20, 33). There is spiritual significance to eating the Lord's Supper in the public worship assembly of the church - we thus "proclaim the Lord's death till he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26). It took courage during the Jewish, Neronian, or Domitian persecutions for Christians to assemble with the church and proclaim their faith in Christ by eating the Lord's Supper with the brethren. It takes neither courage nor energy to sit at home in front of the TV set and "virtually participate" with others in their own homes. Furthermore, this is a violation of the New Testament pattern for the Lord's Supper.

The "when" for the Lord's Supper, the first day of the week, is revealed only one time (Acts 20:7). The "where" is stated four (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:18, 20, 33). There is spiritual significance to each. Why do brethren bind the when and loose the where?

And this also has unforeseen consequences. I have been engaged in a written discussion with three Nigerian preachers who believe there should be one eldership for each city regardless of the number of

congregations there. Of course, this is wrong (Acts 14:23; 1 Peter 5:1-2).

But what's keeping brethren from all over from doing what many are doing now - sitting in our homes in front of the TV sets and virtually worshiping with other virtual worshipers all over the country, or world, listening to the preacher we like best, regardless of where he is, sending a contribution to the elders where he is a member, and just forgetting about assembling with the saints (Hebrews 10:24-25). Just think, you could live in Anchorage, Alaska and be a "virtual" member of a congregation in Tampa, Florida! So much for local congregations! (1 Corinthians 1:2)

Brethren, I'm thankful for the possibilities for good that technology offers. But don't abuse the technology. Assemble with the saints where you live and are a member to eat the Lord's Supper. As soon as things return to normal, put the Lord first by being in all the worship assemblies and classes of the local church as you can (Matthew 6:33).

Use technology for good. Don't allow it to corrupt the divine pattern or contribute to our spiritual laziness.

¹ Manny also preaches "in person" in Lagos, Nigeria.

Was The Scapegoat a Type Of Christ

Patrick Donahue | Harvest, Alabama, USA

Leviticus 16:21-22 states:

"And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."

That passage sounds a lot like Isaiah 53 and the sacrifice of Jesus, doesn't it? Compare the appropriate parts of Leviticus 16:21-22 to Isaiah 53:6c "and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" and 11c "for he shall bear their iniquities." The wording is almost identical, isn't it? It seems Isaiah 53 is quoting Leviticus 16 ... thrice. The scapegoat then is a type of Christ. In both the scapegoat type and the corresponding reality of Jesus, the people's sins are placed on the one that then takes away their sin.

So then what does Isaiah 53 mean when it says Jesus bore our sins? 1 Peter 2:24 says, "Who bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Similarly Hebrews 9:28 states, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." There has been some debate among brethren about what it means that Jesus "bore" our sins. Thankfully Isaiah 53 clears the matter up for us. Verse 12e ("he bare the sin of many") and 11c ("he shall bear their iniquities") is defined in 6c as "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." So Jesus bore our sins in the sense our sins were laid on him.

Similar to when a heavy load is laid on a pack mule, the mule bears or carries the pack. Except as regarding sin (which is an idea), we mean spiritually not physically – we are talking about Jesus bearing the responsibility/punishment for our sin (not the guilt as many Calvinists say). The scapegoat of Leviticus 16 affords this same definition for "bearing sin." Verse 22 states "the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities" while verse 21 supplies the specifics of that - "all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat." The goat bearing the sin simply meant the sins were placed on the goat. It is the same with Jesus bearing our sin.

So the scapegoat is a type of Christ - not in that it was sacrificed, but in that:

- sins were placed on both the scapegoat (Leviticus 16:21) and Jesus (Isaiah 53:6c)

- the scapegoat (Leviticus 16:22) and Jesus then both bore those sins (Isaiah 53:11c)

The scapegoat took away the Israelites' sin in type; Jesus does it in reality.

And we had better be glad Jesus bore the punishment for our sin (Isaiah 53:5c). If he hadn't, there would be no possible way we could avoid the spiritual death (Rom 6:23a) we all deserve for our sins (Rom 3:23-26). Jesus bore our sins so we wouldn't have to. In that sense, he substituted for us.

The History of the Institutional Controversy (Part 7)

Jefferson David Tant | Hendersonville, Tennessee, USA

We all know the story of the camel that asked to stick its' nose into the Arab's tent one cold night. But it didn't stop there. The came in bit by bit and finally took over the whole tent. And so it is with allowing even small departures from the Biblical pattern. In time they creep in more and more until they become firmly entrenched.

To reinforce the above mentioned comments, a statement purported to be from Abilene Christian University has been circulated that is a real eye-opener:

"Dear Friends: The Abilene Christian University has taken a bold step in their 2004 Lectureship, and has clearly defined the terms for reforming Church of Christ in the 21st Century. These reforms are already being implemented in many congregations. These reforms will fundamentally change the Church of Christ as we know it. A few of the key elements of this reformation movement are as follows:

1. We should cease our elite and sectarian behavior and ask our brethren in all denominations to forgive our sins, especially that we said they weren't saved.
2. We must not say that we have the truth, but that we are on a spiritual journey, just as our brethren in the denominations are on their spiritual journey.
3. We should have open fellowship with all who say they believe in Jesus. We should follow the example of brave reformists who ask denominational preachers to share pulpits with their congregations. We should also share major social and religious events with our denominational brethren. We should be ecumenical in our thinking and practice, and should openly align ourselves with the current evangelical ecumenical movement.
4. We should continue to say that baptism is important, but that it is not essential for salvation. We should recognize that there are many non-immersed believers who are saved."

Furthermore, A.C.U. recognized Max Lucado as their Outstanding Alumnus one year. This popular author preaches for the Oak Hills church in San Antonio. In recent times, that church has removed "Church of Christ" from its sign, introduced instrumental music in its worship, has exchanged pulpits with a Baptist preacher, and has built a McDonald's style playground on its property. I have material from Lucado that shows he no longer believes baptism is essential for salvation.

The aforementioned statement, reportedly from A.C.U., has been said by some to be of doubtful origin. To authenticate the document, I wrote to Royce Money, then president of A.C.U. asking about the document. He did not reply. But even if this statement was not officially issued by A.C.U., those who are familiar with the school testify that it pretty well represents what is going on there. I called a preacher in Abilene to ask him about this, and he verified that it was representative. I do not delight in mentioning these matters, as A.C.U. is my own alma mater. Lucado appeared on Larry King's TV program. When asked point blank if Lucado believed that faith in Jesus was necessary for salvation, he replied in the negative. It's hard to believe a supposed gospel preacher would make such a statement, and on national TV!

One of the featured speakers at the 2005 A.C.U. Lectureship was Don Jeanes, President of Milligan College, a Christian Church school. What other denominational preachers would A.C.U. invite? Royce Money, A.C.U.'s president, was interviewed by the Christian Chronicle about this matter, and made this statement: "I would fight vigorously if instrumental music were attempted to be introduced into my home

congregation. I am firmly within the a cappella tradition, but I have a tolerance for those who make other choices, and I don't see that it needs to constitute a complete severing of fellowship or alienation. I just don't see the need for that." (April 1, 2006). Notice that he said that a cappella singing was just a "tradition." That says much!

One of the featured speakers at the 2014 Summit (A.C.U.'s annual lecture program) was Barbara Brown Taylor, an Episcopalian priest and professor of religion at Piedmont College, a Methodist school in Georgia. She is rated as one of the top ten preachers in the United States. The world may so consider her, but I cannot find a description of her in the Lamb's Book of Life.

I called Phil Schubert, ACU president, and asked him about this. His grandparents and my parents were close friends, as were his mother and father and myself. He said Taylor was an expert in her field, or words to that effect, and they just wanted to benefit from her knowledge.

How far have our schools gone? The Christian Scholars Conference (CSC) convened in June, 2008 on the campus of David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, with support from several sister schools—Pepperdine University, Abilene Christian University, Oklahoma Christian University and Harding University. The conference represented sixty-eight colleges and universities, along with twenty-four additional institutions.

The CSC platform affirms that it "is dedicated to the virtue of diversity which expands world-views, fosters collegiality, demonstrates the highest quality of scholarship, and provides opportunity for all Christian scholars." One participant was former Abilene Christian University student, Jared Cramer. He is now with the Anglican (Episcopal) church preparing for the priesthood. On his blog, the "Reverend Cramer" (as he calls himself) emphatically declares he has abandoned the ideal of "restorationism." "I don't believe in Restorationism or Primitivism. I just don't. It's not Biblical, there's no call to it. I don't care two bits if today's church looks like the first century church, and I don't think God does."

Cramer's presentation was titled "One New Humanity: Reconsidering Homosexuality in Light of the Ecclesiology of Ephesians." After examining the ecclesiology of Ephesians, this paper engages in a case study on the place of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) Christians in the Episcopal Church. The main proposition the author attempts to argue is that there is nothing "wrong about a faithful, loving, monogamous same-sex relationship." He says, "I fail to see what it is about homosexuality that declares it as inherently evil" ("Homosexuality: But Why?").

It is hard to imagine a more egregious affront on the Bible and morality than for these so-called "Christian" schools to participate in, and thus endorse, an apostate's attempt to clean up homosexuality and make it acceptable. This is "political correctness" gone amok. This was not a surprise to the participating schools, as Cramer had presented his position as a thesis at ACU in 2006, and his topic was printed in the program for the conference at Lipscomb. Indeed, this was the topic of Cramer's Master's thesis at ACU when he received his degree. (to be continued)

Teaching In Song

William Stewart | Odessa, Ontario, Canada

Humans are creatures of rhythm and rhyme. Our lives are surrounded by sound and poetry; from the time we rise in the morning (to a radio alarm) to the time we lay our head down at night (for young children, with a lullaby). Consider the radio at the doctor's office, the mellow tune in the elevator, the birds chirping in the park, the familiar rhymes at nursery schools, the chiming bells from the clock in town square, the musical instruments of street entertainers. Everywhere around us, we find a beat or a time, and at times, some verse, lyrics, or rhyme associated with it.

It is just another example of God's great wisdom that songs are to be part of our worship. The apostle Paul

wrote, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16; cf. Ephesians 5:19). A twofold purpose is served when God's people blend their voices together in song. It is an activity by which God is to be glorified, just as any other portion of our worship. But more than this, it is an excellent teaching tool.

Recall when the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea, Moses and Miriam led them in song (Exodus 15). One generation later, the LORD gave a song for Israel to teach their children, that it might be a witness against them when they turned from God (Deuteronomy 31:19-32:44). Deborah and Barak sang a song proclaiming praise to God for victory (Judges 5:1-31). David gave many songs to Israel, which addressed a variety of topics. Songs were of immense importance to God's people under the Old Covenant.

Friend, song should play a significant role in our worship. Singing is not just something we do to pass the time before the preacher gets up. It is an activity of equal value as any other commanded by God. It is the opportunity and responsibility of every child of God to participate, for each of us is commanded to "teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." This being the case, we must be sure that our songs contain no error. It is a sober duty, even in song, to be a teacher of God's word.

Encouraging Our Women

Mike Thomas | Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA

When is the last time you prayed for your wife or thanked her for her devotion to the Lord? How about your daughter? Do you praise her often for her respect and commitment to you? Or what about the women at church; do we take special note of those who teach the classes, prepare the meals, get their family to services, or support their men who serve within the church? Honestly, where would we be without the influence of godly women? It is as Paul said in 1 Timothy 2:14-15, "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless, she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control." For all that Eve's sin did to the female gender (Genesis 3:16), a godly woman redeems herself by committing to holiness and righteous service. She showers blessings upon those who feel the extent of her influence, especially within the home. Unlike the pain "the mother of all living" introduced to the world, a woman of God brings hope, virtue, and encouragement to those who know her.

Think about it. It is evident that the local church is incomplete and lacking without elders (Titus 1:5). That is indisputable. We benefit tremendously from these godly men who "watch out" for our souls in making sure we are protected, provided for, and guided spiritually. The same is true with faithful deacons who work tirelessly to make sure things are operating in a decent and orderly manner within the local church. And yet, none of these men could carry out these important tasks without godly wives who help them qualify for (and remain committed to) this work and service. Indeed, the spouses of elders and deacons "must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things" (1 Timothy 3:11) if these men are to be eligible to serve. Accordingly, if a church is fortunate enough to have good elders and deacons, they should offer regular petitions and prayers on behalf of the women who support them. These men could not do their work without the aid and presence of their godly women.

I can attest to the same being true for the preacher's wife. Though he is not required to be married to do his work, as with an elder or deacon, a married evangelist must have a godly wife if he is to meet the challenges of proclaiming the truth. Frankly, one of the main reasons a man endures that type of work is because of the support and encouragement of a godly wife. I know mine has helped me tremendously. Furthermore, it appears to me that Paul is referencing the character and faith of a preacher's wife in determining his eligibility to receive financial support from churches. Notice what he said in 1 Corinthians 9:5 when he was discussing a preacher's pay. He asked, "Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles...?" Why make that distinction if it were not relevant in determining an evangelist's support? Even if that is not what Paul is saying, is it not true that a man is hindered in his

preaching when his wife is not a believer? I mean really, will churches be quick to work with or provide for a man if his wife is not a Christian? Not likely. But besides all of that, a gospel preacher is only made better when his wife loves the Lord and His word as much as he does. The importance of godly women cannot be overstated. The church at Philippi began with a woman being open to the gospel (Acts 16:14-15) – a church which later met in her house (v. 40). Timothy became a great servant of Christ because of the genuine faith of his mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5). Countless men have been led to the Lord because of the “the conduct of their wives” who exhibited “a gentle and quiet spirit” (1 Peter 3:2, 4). All of these blessings still flow today when wives exhort their husbands to overcome their failures and when mothers work tirelessly to provide for their children. I know I have benefited greatly from my mother’s faith, my wife’s encouragement, my daughter’s example, and many other integral women of God. I am confident you can say the same of your own life.

Thus, let us be mindful of the women whose influence is used for the glory of God. They need our encouragement. Let us pray for and encourage the mothers who are physically and mentally exhausted in getting their children to class and worship. Let us be mindful of the leaders’ wives who must sacrifice personal time with their husband as he meets the needs of the congregation. Let us think of the one who has been by our side through all the ups and downs and still prods us on. Let us pray for and encourage these precious women. Good men do not just happen. They are formed as a result of the patient support and guidance of God and His people, especially within the home.

What Was the Purpose of Miracles? (Part 3)

Julius C. Nwankwo | Ahiaba, Nigeria

Were Miracles to Continue?

Listen to Paul as he discusses this subject with the Corinthians:

“Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect [complete] has come, then that which is in part will be done away” (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).

God’s will was revealed by the Holy Spirit only a part at a time, “bit by bit.” A full and complete revelation was not made known to the apostles at once. Miraculous powers such as prophecies, foreign languages, supernatural knowledge, were some of the means by which the gospel was revealed and confirmed. But when the gospel system was completely revealed, miracles had served their purpose and came to an end.

But it is objected that the “perfect” to which Paul refers does not mean the will of God, but the coming of Jesus Christ, who is the “Perfect One.” But this is not the case. When Paul said, “*When the perfect is come,*” *he used the neuter gender.* Jesus Christ is not neuter gender. He is masculine. In speaking of the will of God in Hebrews 10:9-10, the inspired writer employs the neuter gender. “He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified....” The word for perfect means “brought to completion; fully accomplished, fully developed; complete, entire, as opposed to what is partial and limited” (1 Corinthians 13:10, Analytical Greek Lexicon). *So, when God’s revelation to man was completed*, * “fully developed, entire*,” *there was no further need for miracles*. They had served their purpose and come to an end--were “done away.” We now have the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25).

“. . . ‘When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.’” *These miraculous gifts, bestowed for the purpose of revealing and confirming the will of God, were distributed to apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers*. The reason for their bestowal was “the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith” (Ephesians 4:8-13). “The faith” is the entire gospel system.

Jude speaks of it as “the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). These miraculous

gifts were to last until “the faith” was completed, until it became one unit. *Once it was made whole, finished, fully developed, the miracles which had been responsible for its revelation and confirmation passed away*. That revelation was completed in A.D. 96, when the apostle John finished his last letter. Since that day, there has been no need for miracles. We have the word of God, all of the truth into which the apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit and it is to govern us in all of our beliefs and practices.

No New Truth

One must not change, alter or corrupt the gospel as it was preached by the apostles (Galatians 1:6-9). If anyone goes on and does not abide in the teaching which is from Christ, he does not have God (2 John 9). We are warned that if we speak, we must speak as the words of God (1 Peter 4:11). Jesus Christ has given us everything that pertains to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). The Scriptures are able to furnish us unto every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is not only dangerous but damning to add to or subtract from the word of God (Revelation 22:18-19). There have been no new revelations through these past two thousand years since the close of the New Testament. *There is no such thing as an additional revelation, or a progressional revelation*. The Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all truth, and we have that truth revealed and confirmed today in the New Testament, the perfect will of God (Romans 12:1,2).

Can You Speak In Tongues?

The subject of speaking in miraculous tongues has become a subject of keen interest among religious people of the world. This claim has been made by various Pentecostal groups for over one hundred years, but in the past ten years, many groups are claiming the modern practice of the New Testament feat and are claiming to possess such power by means of the Holy Spirit.

An investigation of these claims is the purpose of this work. We need to prove every spirit or doctrine (1 John 4:1), and are told to prove all things in order to hold fast to the good (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Let us therefore try this doctrine held by so many lately and see if it can be approved by the Word of God.

Is Man’s Word Enough?

Let us say in the beginning that no claim of miraculous power to speak in tongues, heal the sick, or perform any other supernatural act should be accepted at face value. Just hearsay or some isolated case where I heard cannot be accepted as a factual happening. Human claims are not absolute facts in religion.

There must be an absolute standard by which all men evaluate and consider these claims. That standard is the New Testament. This great Book of God must sit in judgment upon human actions--not the other way, where human actions sit in judgment of the Bible.

Not that man is not honest and sincere when he makes a claim like this, but he could be honestly mistaken. *Many millions imagine in their heart that they have cancer, or some other disease they have read about and may become sick over worry about that very disease*. *The feelings of one about these diseases can either be verified or denied only after a careful examination by a qualified doctor*. We claim that the Bible is the place to check these claims to verify or deny this mania. *Feelings alone will not suffice*. An examination is necessary.

Raising Money for the Lord's Work: How and by Whom? (Part 1)

O. Lesley Egharevba | Lagos, Nigeria

Introduction

The question of how the church should raise money in fulfilling her God-given mission is of tremendous importance because several teachings are flying about by our brethren on the subject matter. While some are of the view that the church is to raise money and execute her work by her members’ contributions, others are of the opinion that the church could raise money from just anybody or group to execute her work

and not necessarily by her members alone. While the former view implies that the church, as God made it, is all sufficient to carry out her work, the latter view implies that the church is not able to do this and must depend on others to execute her work.

Currently, a letter is being circulated amongst a group known as "COC UNIBEN ALUMNI." In the letter, this group is soliciting for financial support to raise 15 million naira for the church of Christ in UNIBEN to acquire a land and directing all monetary support to the alumni bank account.

Plans are on ground to combine the funds generated by this group together with the funds generated by the UNIBEN church to get the land. Note that the COC UNIBEN ALUMNI is a separate group or body apart from the church in UNIBEN. The association was established, with a separate name, purse (bank account), leadership, meeting dates, etc. and its members comprised of people from different congregations (only a few of the members belonged or still belong, in the UNIBEN church). The said letter is attached at the end of this article for readers' perusal.

Is it the work of the alumni to raise money for the church to do a work? Is there a scriptural justification or precedent for such practice? I had spoken against this practice in the WhatsApp group where it was shared; showing the incongruity and absurdity in it but the promoters of this scheme are bent on going ahead with it regardless of scriptural exposition about it. Many quibble about it in an attempt to find the practice in the Scripture. Although, it must be mentioned that some were honest enough to admit that what they are doing has no scriptural backup but feel they could carry on with it since the Bible nowhere tells them, "Thou shall not raise money for the UNIBEN church to do her work." They need such expressed statement from the Bible before they would consider such practice as an unscriptural undertaking. How interesting!

One of the best ways of learning the truth from error (as suggested by H.E. Phillips) is to read the issue discussed by competent men on both sides of the question and see each argument and how it is met. Being complacent or nonchalant about a pressing issue as this is not an expression of love, as love does not rejoice in iniquity but rejoices in the truth (1 Corinthians 13:6). Hence, an attempt will be made in this piece to address the issue from the scriptural perspective and all the quibbles introduced in support of it will be shown as unsustainable.

What The Issue Is Not

It is necessary to put some facts into the right perspective from the outset in order to understand the cause of disagreement and avoid being misrepresented by people.

First, the issue is not about the church buying land and erecting a meeting place for such is hinted in the scriptures (Hebrews 10:25). A gathering or assembling implies a place of meeting and a place of meeting could be a building (Acts 2:46), a house (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15); a school (Acts 19:9), or any available location or environment (Matthew 18:20).

Second, the issue is not about the existence of a separate body, for individuals have the legal right to come together to form a body or organization to fulfill whatever mission or goals they have set, based on the laws of the land.

Third; the issue is not about members contributing to the church, for we saw Barnabas and other Christians did this (Acts 4:34-37).

What The Issue Is

The issue is this: when a church has work to do, how and by whom should the money be raised? Should the church raise money by her members' contributions, or should the church go ahead to raise money from another body, separate and apart from the church, in addition to her own contributions? Note that the work is scriptural, but the method of raising funds for the work is the focal point in this piece.

In preaching the gospel, the church may use some expedient methods such as printing tracts, broadcasting (radio/television), door knocking, etc., since no particular method is specified in the command to preach (Matthew 28:18; Mark 16:15). In grooming her members, the church may create conducive environment to achieve this by erecting a building, renting an apartment, dividing the classes, etc., since no specific method is binding in the command to teach and where to meet (Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 10:25). Thus, hardly will anyone be justified in teaching that the church cannot print tracts, own or rent a place of meeting, preach on radio or TV, etc. But when the church wants to achieve any or all of these, who should raise the money, and how should the money be raised? (to be continued next month)

The Road That We Chose

Pat Andrews | Conway, Arkansas, USA

In this life that we live, Many roads lay before us,
The ways that we choose, Will mold and define us.
(Romans 12:2)

Because we were created, With a will of our own,
From the time we were born, Until now, that we're grown.
(Joshua 24:15; Genesis 3:22)

When we were in our youth, Many times we got lost,
We chose the wrong road to travel, Without counting the cost.
(Luke 14:28)

We stayed on that road, Never turning around,
No longer caring, Which road we went down.
(Proverbs 26:11; 2 Peter 2:22)

Throughout our lives, We've had to decide,
To either be humble, Or pursue sinful pride.
(1 John 2:15-17; Psalms 10:4)

We just ambled along, Down the road that was wide,
No longer ashamed, But ensnared by that pride.
(Matthew 7:13-14; Jeremiah 6:15; Jeremiah 8:12)

"I'm not afraid, I'm not worried", Are words that we say,
"Just look at the billions, That chose the same way."
(Luke 13:24)

We have chosen the road, Full of pleasures and sins,
And we'll boast of our choice, Until our life ends.
(Hebrews 11:25; Acts 24:25)

On that great day before us, We will look and we'll see,
The road that we chose, And just where it leads.
(Deuteronomy 30:19)

There's no turning back, This road has an end,
The road that we chose, Was a road filled with sin.
(Hebrews 9:27)

Our life was so easy, In fact it was great,
We had so many friends, But they'll share in our fate.
(Luke 6:39)

When we stand before God, With our life in review,
We might scream in terror, "I didn't know what to do."
(Romans 1:16-22)

When we're told to depart, What can we say,
The right road was there, But we chose the wrong way.
(Matthew 7:21-23)

If we are wise, And before it's too late,
We'll turn it around, And escape our lost fate.
(John 12:16-21)

That day draws ever closer, Each day we survive,
Let's open up our Bibles, And read what's inside.
(Acts 11:12-14; Hebrews 4:12)

God doesn't have grandchildren, We're not judged in mass,
We will stand there alone, To account for our past.
(Revelation 20:11-13)

If we die lost, As our judgment draws close,
We cannot blame others, It Was The Road That We Chose.
(Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10)



If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

[Click here](#) to forward this email to a friend

Meditate On These Things (MOTT)
2950 Hwy 5 S
Mountain Home, Arkansas 72653
US

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

Vertical DELIVERED BY
response
Try It Free Today!