IS GEORGE PEPPERDINE COLLEGE SOUND?

O. L. CASTLEBERRY

Many rumors and facts have been circulated among our brethren concerning the soundness of George Pepperdine College. Brethren are deeply concerned and often anxious to know true conditions. As any “Christian” college wields influence that is far reaching and therefore greatly concerns followers of Christ, it is both natural and necessary that as many facts as are available be made known to Christians so that sound judgments may be possible. It is the sole purpose of this article to make known such facts. I have gone to great lengths in use of time, thought, work, prayer and money because all need to know the truth on the matter. I write this article because I love the Church of the Lord and believe its welfare is endangered by George Pepperdine College.

A few introductory facts should be mentioned here about George Pepperdine College. Unlike other of “our” schools it is not dependent on the general church members as individuals for financial aid or for the greater portion of its students. It derives its financial needs from Brother George Pepperdine. Most of its students come from denominations as is shown by the December 1946 enrollment figures when only 302 students out of 1109 were even nominally members of the church of Christ. While the number of students increases each year yet the percentage of members of the church of Christ decreases!

Not needing the support or recommendation of any great percentage of members of the church of Christ, the college authorities have been free to follow their own inclinations in all affairs. These inclinations have led to a policy which has included seeking worldly recognition, worldly friendship and praise, and even cooperation with denominations and their preachers. It has also included some modernistic attitudes toward Bible authority. These charges will be considered later in this article in detail.

The college is located in Los Angeles. Both Los Angeles and its neighbor, Hollywood, are extremely wicked. In such a location especially the true servant of Christ, interested in protecting the Church and the faith of its members from the influence of the outside must stand boldly and aggressively against the onslaughts of worldly influence. He must preach a gospel of strength and fearlessness, not of hesitancy and mild unconcernedness. In guiding young boys and girls who may often be away from home and parental guidance for the first time, a tremendous obligation is assumed. A school which advertises in gospel papers that it offers a wholesome Christian environment to our youth is under great obligation to be sincere
and wholly devoted to the church and its Head. When it fails to do so it is a failure which is heart-rending and terrifying to consider.

The position and trend of George Pepperdine College can perhaps be best presented by mentioning throughout the rest of this article facts concerning faculty, class work, and items in the college paper, the Graphic. Brief bits of information about such things should indicate the true nature of affairs at the college or at least be helpful in determining your own attitude if you are not personally familiar with these facts.

The Faculty

Much could be said concerning the faculty, however, only two men shall be considered: Dean E. V. Pullias and Prof. Ralph Wilburn. Dean E. V. Pullias came directly to the college from the Durham, North Carolina Christian Church. He had worshipped with this Christian Church for over three years and taught a very popular women's class for them without condemning instrumental music. Write Mrs. E. P. Baldwin and Mrs. Laura Conklin of 917 Chester Ave. if you desire to verify this fact. He sang with their instruments and presided over their communion table, a fact which was learned in direct conversation with Elder Joseph Spencer of the Durham Christian Church. The Christian Church there is modernistic and has young people's meetings with the Baptists. I went to Durham and verified my statements personally. Dean Pullias is now a very important policy influencing official at the college.

Prof. Ralph Wilburn, who holds a Doctor's Degree in Philosophy from the University of Chicago teaches most of the courses in what is called the Graduate School of Religion at Pepperdine. He uses such terms as "your theology" and "my theology" and "Paul's theology as compared with Christ's theology." Dr. Wilburn's "theology" and modernism has been most capably dealt with by Bro. John Wolfe in a recent edition of the Bible Banner. Brethren who have sat in the classes and heard what is taught wish to verify the charges of modernism already brought out in the Wolfe article. I and others plan to deal more with this trend at Pepperdine in another article. Dr. Wilburn speaks of the great inspiring spirituality of former and present denominational leaders and their various doctrines of grace etc., with deep enthusiasm and almost reverence. He classifies the premillennialist, R. H. Boll, as one of the "great" men of the Church, equal in stature to faithful men like Brother T. B. Larimore and David Lipscomb.

Cooperation With Denominations

Denominational cooperation is best shown by the meeting at the Pepperdine Chapel Sunday night starting at 7:30 p.m. November 24, 1946 of the Greyfriars Memorial Church, which, according to the printed programs for the occasion, regularly "holds a worship service every Sabbath evening at 7:30 in the United Presbyterian Church." Dean E. V. Pullias gave the words of welcome and the scripture was read by "Rev. Clifford Ramsdale." The college quartette was scheduled to sing and a denominational preacher, Dr. David Calderwood, preached his sermon. Music was accompanied by instruments. This meeting was held at the same hour as church of Christ services. A statement on the program read "we extend an invitation to you today to become partners in this great project." (This project means to help build up the Greyfriars Memorial Church-a denomination.)

A big rally of a religious group known as Sky Pilots of America was held Sunday, June 15, at 3 p.m., in the Pepperdine Auditorium. According to its own literature the group was started by "Rev. Elmer B. Sachs of the Bassettdale Community Church" and "is interdenominational". Their rally at Pepperdine featured a whistler, tumblers, brass horn players, religious singing accompanied by instruments "and, of course, Rev. Mr. Sachs." Their announcement states, "The Pepperdine Squad of Los Angeles meets Thursday nights and is ready to initiate new members".

Further cooperation is shown in the frequent
chapel speeches by denominational preachers. Though the student body is largely composed of sectarians yet the special outside chapel speakers are in the majority denominational members and preachers. One special speaker in the regular student chapel spoke on Jewish, Catholic and Protestant cooperation. At another time a film was shown in the chapel condoning and urging cooperation among the three groups mentioned. With regard to the chapel it should be said that sports announcements consume far more time than preaching or teaching the gospel.

Quotes below are from the college paper, the Graphic, which states, it is “published by students-under the supervision of the faculty committee.” Dr. Wade Ruby is faculty advisor. It is therefore assumed that these articles have the approval of the college authorities. This therefore is the type of entertainment which has been recommended by the school through its paper.

**Theatre Recommendations (Graphic)**

Nov. 3, '44-A play is advertised as available in downtown Los Angeles called “White Cargo” which is a “tropical romance of love and lust in the Congo” with “Tonya in her fiery performance as the temptress.” “It is the tale of heat savagery and dry rot of Africa’s West Coast.”

Feb. 2, ‘45-Theta Sigma Chi’s (among many others) attend a play called The Drunkard. Beer and root beer with pretzels are served at this play during the intermission. A Pepperdine ministerial student regularly sang in this play.

April 20, ‘45-A stage show is recommended which “concerns Nifty Miller and her battle with a hula dancer and a snake-charmer for the love of her son.” Hula dancing may be seen in this play.

Pepperdine’s own play originally called “Spring Dance” was changed in name to “Wary Quarry”. This play had as a part of the plot a mistaken illegitimacy. Much slang was used. This was put on in the Pepperdine auditorium.

Pepperdine Student Handbook (‘44-‘45)—In the pages of this student handbook a section is devoted to suggesting to students suitable places to visit under the heading “Seeing Los Angeles.” A place called Earl Carroll’s is included as a place for the students to see. “Earl Carroll’s” is a “night club” featuring “lavish girl shows” with “dancing and drinking” according to the Herald-Express paper of June 12, 1947. It features near-nude girl shows.

**Duel In The Sun** is a movie which according to Life Magazine “is a passionate spectacular, immoral western. It offers murder, rape, dancing, drunkenness, religion, prostitution and war”. The heroine “has a wardrobe which barely keeps the rain off”. “Condemned last week by California branches of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish organizations, by the D. A. R., the American Legion Auxiliary, the Girl Scouts and other groups, and threatened with a possible ban by the Legion of Decency”.—Of this picture Pepperdine’s Graphic states:

Jan. 8, ‘47—“After a depressing absence of good motion pictures downtown Los Angeles and Hollywood is suddenly alive with the long ballyhooed pet releases of the major studios. Selznick’s Duel In The Sun sneaked under the dead line to be one of the major contenders for this year’s Academy Awards. The Vogue Theatre is running the film, all seats reserved, for an indefinite engagement.”

Feb. 5, ‘47—“PICTURES OF THE WEEK”- Motion Pictures of the week! In a brief view, the best pictures of the week appear to be ... , “Duel In The Sun ... ,”

March 5, ‘47—“Still showing downtown at the Fairfax Theatre ... “Duel In The Sun” ... still banned by the Catholic Church ... still breaking all sales records and still uncult by the censors”.

**Dancing at Pepperdine**

Dancing is common in the life of Pepperdine students, even among many of the church members there now. A class in folk dancing, called the American Indian Mask Dances, is taught at the college. In this class girls wear shorts and some of the men who are with them wear equally as little. They dance rhythmically to music. While some of these dances are more like folk games others approach the modern dance. In one the man placed his hands on the woman’s waist while they danced to music in shorts.

Lastly, Pepperdiners through the Graphic find recommendations to view adagio dancing, ballet, Indian Mask Dances, and one hula-dance. Dance records are advertised in the paper with a picture of a ball-room couple and another with a jitter-bug group dancing to illustrate the intended use of the records. One advertisement offers the services of a girl on campus in helping to dress for a “prom” which is a dance. The following are quotes to prove my statements:

Nov. 17, ‘44—“Argentinita, the Queen of the Dance and her company (of dancers) will return here.” (to L. A.)

Dec. 1, ‘44—“The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo returns here-will bring in addition to its own company of over seventy dancers ...”

Feb. 16, ‘45—“About the biggest news in the L. A. entertainment world this week is the annual dance series by the Ballet Theatre.”

Oct. 20, ‘44—Recommended is a group of solo dancers of exceptional skill. Ballet entertainment will be much the vogue this season.”

April 20, ‘45—Hula-dancers.

Nov. 20, ‘46—Indian Mask dances on Pepperdine stage.

Feb. 22, ‘46—Square dancing on Pepperdine
stage in a play.

In the April 3, 1946 issue of the Firm Foundation President Tiner of Pepperdine said, "There has never been a single thing said or done at the college to encourage dancing and we would fight such an attempt." Has this been done?

Lord's Day at Pepperdine

April 20, '46—All interested sophomores are invited to a beach party to take place Saturday and Sunday, May 4th and 5th.

May 25, '45—P for a day of fun (Sunday) the Delta Chi Omega and Theta Sigma Chi Sororities are planning to spend Sunday, May 27, at Huntington Beach enjoying sun, water and food.

Nov. 3, '44—The Graphic points out "Bargain priced Sunday special matinee at 5 p.m. of the play they termed "a tropical romance of love and lust."

March 9, '47—Sunday night basketball game with Clifton's Cafeteria.

Dress at Pepperdine

God clothed Adam and Eve with skins when they were dressed in fig leaves only. The New Testament teaches "That women adorn themselves in modest apparel."

Graphic, April 20, '45-A type of dress is recommended which is "new and exciting. They're shoulderless around the low necklines" "cotton sun suits that double as swim suits are those of the two-piece design. Shorts are straighter in design.

May 24, '46—"Everything points toward cool deep neck-lines."

Jan. 15, '47—"Watch Hollywood for bathing suits and play clothes designs."

Pepperdine girls mix indiscriminately with men while both are wearing shorts at the dancing class described. Many appear in brief shorts on or near the tennis courts which may easily be viewed from the men's dormitory. Mixed bathing at the beach is common among students and sanctioned by the school. The latter statement is shown by such notices in the Graphic as the following:

April 16, '47—"Remember! Freshman Beach Party, Saturday, April 26 Details later."

A Summary

Readers of this paper have probably already heard rumors about this college. This writer has tried to present facts and offers further proof on request with regard to any statement made. Other men who may be referred to for more information are Homer Hailey, Otis Gatewood, John Wolfe, Albert Lovelady, Roy Tidwell, Arnold Watson, Glenn Wallace and John Bessire. Otis Gatewood, former instructor in personal evangelism at the college and John Bessire, student, organized some class members to do personal work among the students es most students are not Christians. Dean E. V. Pullias told him that he forbade such organized personal work among the students and the attempt was stopped. Dean Pullias told Bro. Gatewood to go work anywhere he wanted to, that there was plenty of territory between Los Angeles and San Diego, but to let the students on the Pepperdine campus alone.

Many meetings have been held with the Pepperdine authorities by our faithful brethren but to no avail. Those who discuss improvements in the college are told such things as "We don't care" (E. V. Pullias to Albert Lovelady) or "This is a big country, if you don't like it here, go elsewhere", (said to another preacher).

If Pepperdine College departures are not corrected the college will wreck the faith and hurt the church to the extent of its influence, which is great. However our feelings in such matters the Cause of Christ must not be made to suffer by our silence.

O. L. CASTLEBERRY
1244 W. 66th Street, L. A. 44
A few comments from brethren regarding the article "Is George Pepperdine College Sound", are as follows:

Otis Gatewood (Germany) "I believe you have presented facts as they are in a kind and Christian manner and I believe it will do good and no harm to have those facts published."

Roy Palmer (Germany) "I think that all the information which you have documented should be made known to the brethren, with the hope that the situation may be made better, or some be saved from its influence."

Homer Hailey (Honolulu, T. H.) "I believe it is accurate in every way and should be published in the brotherhood."

Roy Tidwell (Minister) "You may be assured that this article is a true statement of facts and that there are plenty of responsible brethren who will stand behind it."

Glenn Wallace (Minister, College Church of Christ, Abilene, Texas) "I will have a copy sent to the Firm Foundation with my request that Bro. Showalter publish it."

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I want to thank the Bible Banner for the opportunity to see Brother O. L. Castleberry’s article before it was printed so that I might reply in this issue of the paper. I have taken this criticism up with the men involved, (as is our policy) the Board of Trustees and some of the leading preachers of the church. Although many of my friends advised me not to reply, it was the consensus of opinion that an answer should be made to these charges. Naturally, much of this criticism was not new to us as we had been aware of it for sometime. I shall, therefore, answer Brother Castleberry’s article giving what I know to be the facts. I shall say nothing in this reply on hearsay but shall state only those things I know to be true.

1. It is my sincere opinion that Brother Castleberry’s interest in the “truth” about Pepperdine College grows out of a spirit of bitterness and antagonism. I believe this to be true because he has expressed such bitterness to me, to Bro. Pepperdine and to many others. He has said frequently that he has dedicated his life to fighting and opposing Pepperdine College. This being the case, we may expect articles on this subject from Brother Castleberry for sometime to come. He was on our campus in the fall of 1945 for about two months. Unless he has done so under cover, he has rarely or never been on the campus since then. If the conditions he described had been true and had since been changed, he would not know it.

2. Enrollment. The church is not strong on the West Coast although it is growing in a very gratifying way. This fall term the College had approximately 1500 students enrolled. Of that number 371 listed themselves as members of the church of Christ. Our total enrollment in 1940 was only 407. We have about 350 students in our dormitories, and of this number about sixty per cent are members of the church of Christ. Since our dormitory space is limited, the increase in enrollment has been largely local young people who wished to secure education in a Christian college, and since there are so few church of Christ young people in the Los Angeles vicinity, the increase has been from other young people. We have selected the off campus students carefully as to character and ability so as to keep a good atmosphere on our campus. We make no apology for the presence of these fine young people. On the contrary, we consider the opportunity to teach them the Bible (which is a required subject) land other subjects one of the greatest opportunities of our lives. We only wish we could accept hundreds more who would like to have the advantage of Christian education.

3. Pepperdine’s Financial Support. It is true that Pepperdine is a private College reasonably well equipped and endowed; but this financial stability does not, we trust, affect our loyalty to the truth. In building this College we have not put the pleasing of men first. I do not believe we would have done so had we ‘been financially dependent—at least I hope not—for we believe we should be true first of all to the will of God.

Our College has achieved considerable recognition academically, in athletics, in speaking and debate, in fact, in all activities it has entered. We do not believe it is unchristian to do well whatever legitimate work one’s hands find to do. We have tried to do the best of our ability never to compromise right to achieve such recognition and we shall continue to do so in the future. We do intend to continue to do our best in everything we undertake.

4. Wickedness of Los Angeles and Hollywood. Brother Castleberry is a little vague here. Los Angeles is a large and great city. Like other cities, and small towns too for that matter, there is much evil here and of course, much good. The truth must be taught clearly and forcefully everywhere, Los Angeles and Hollywood included, and we teach it that way. Young people must be carefully guided everywhere, and even then, their conduct will not always be exemplary. We take our share of responsibility to give our students such care and guidance. Patrons of our school have been almost unanimous in their praise of the guidance their children have received at Pepperdine College. (For examples of this praise see the college bulletin entitled, “A Blueprint for Character Building,” published in April, 1945.) Of course, there have been mistakes and we have not always succeeded with all young people. We have never and do not now make claim to perfection, but we do make a sincere effort to do right and to correct mistakes.

5. As for Dean E. V. Pultis the facts about his life and work are well known in the brotherhood. He was reared in the church of Christ having obeyed the gospel as a boy. He has never been a member of any other religious group and to state or imply otherwise, as does Brother Castleberry, is a misrepresentation of the facts. He began teaching Bible school classes when he was attending David Lipscomb College in 1934 and has consecutively taught classes since that time. This teaching has largely been done, of course, in churches of Christ, but from time to time he has had opportunity to teach and speak about Christ in many places and under various cir-
curnstances: in colleges, in universities, before men and women's clubs, before civic groups, in denominational churches, in orphans homes, etc. - wherever he had a free hand to teach the full truth.

When he was in Durham, North Carolina, attending Duke University, the nearest congregation was at Winston-Salem about eighty miles away. He often went there. However, throughout this period his membership remained at his home congregation in Tennessee. The conservative Christian church (called Disciples of Christ) in Durham invited him to "join" them and to teach an adult class. He did not join them, which they fully understood, but accepted the opportunity to teach as he believed. This was agreed for and for a period of time he taught this Bible class and a Bible class at the University, teaching the New Testament on all subjects, including the use of singing only in the worship. This teaching seemed to him at the time to be the best opportunity to proclaim the truth. As to the wisdom of the effort and as to the good that was done, God will judge.

The churches where he has taught classes over an extended period of time include David Lipscomb College, South Pittsburgh (Tennessee), Cornell Avenue (Chicago), the Central Church (Los Angeles), and the Vermont Avenue Church (Los Angeles). In the last ten years he has written regularly on a variety of subjects for the leading journals published by our brethren, including The Gospel Advocate and The Firm Foundation.

Although he is not a full-time preacher, he has preached for numerous congregations. In the past ten years he has spoken for the following congregations in Southern California at the request of their elders or leaders: Huntington Park, South Gate, Alhambra, Pasadena, Fillmore, Van Nuys, Eighteenth & G (San Diego), Hillcrest (San Diego), Birch and Fairview (Santa Ana), Broadway and Walnut (Santa Ana), in Los Angeles: East Los Angeles, Southwest, Central, 43rd and McKinley Avenue; Gardena, North Hollywood, Hollywood, Santa Monica, Inglewood, North Long Beach, Ninth & Lime (Long Beach), Central (Long Beach), El Monte, Arcadia, Redlands, Puente, Santa Paula, Compton, Whittier and perhaps others. Thus, his life and teachings are well known among the brethren.

6. Brother Ralph Wilburn. Brother Ralph Wilburn does have considerable training. Brother Castleberry is correct on this point. Brother Wilburn's doctor's degree is not in philosophy, as Brother Castleberry states, but is in religion, particularly in the history of religious thought. Brother Wilburn "does not teach most of the graduate courses in religion at the present time, as Brother Castleberry states, but about one-fourth of them. There is no such thing as the "Graduate School of Religion", as Brother Castleberry states, but the advanced work in religion is called the "Graduate Department of Religion". I do not wish to say that Brother Castleberry wilfully misrepresented the above facts but frequently does not have all the facts before he writes his conclusions, as you will see amply illustrated as you read further on in this article.

I have listened to Brother Wilburn preach regularly; I have talked with him in detail about his beliefs; I have talked to numerous students who have studied with him; I have been in conference with him when those who are critical of him were given the opportunity to ask him any questions they wished; and I have heard his answers. On the basis of this first-hand knowledge I know he believes and teaches all the fundamental truths of the New Testament, including the divinity of Christ, the virgin birth, the reality of the miracles, the resurrection of Jesus, the atonement and the other great Christian beliefs. Surely this is not Modernism.

Brother Wilburn has respect for the great personalities of church history: Augustine, Luther, Zwingli, etc. etc. He recognizes the weakness of all men, but surely a student of church history is not called upon to condemn everything done and said by all the men from the post-apostolic age to 1804 in order to be a loyal Christian.

Brother Wilburn does not hold the premillennial position. He has made his position clear on this subject in an article in The Gospel Advocate. With regard to specific criticisms of Brother Wilburn, he will make his own statement on the points about which there has been rumor.

7. Cooperation with denominations. The implications of this whole section are false. Here are the facts: Previously when we did not use our auditorium so continuously as we now do, it was our policy to allow the use of the auditorium to any reputable community group as a good neighbor gesture. Sometimes the groups have been religious. As a rule, those accommodated have been of a civic nature. Now and then Dean Pullias has been requested to say a word of greeting to these groups. Sometimes some other official of the College has done so. On the occasion referred to by Brother Castleberry, a group of Scotchmen of the Greyfriars 'Scottish Church asked to have a Thanksgiving program in the auditorium and were given permission to do so. They requested that someone from the College extend a welcome. On this particular occasion Dean Pullias left the Vermont Avenue service where he was worshipping that evening a little early in order to say that the College was glad for its neighbors to use its building. The Dean reported an interesting old country program, including a beautiful display of fruit, music by a bag pipe band all dressed in kilts, a speech by the British Consul in Los Angeles, as well as the main speaker.
Such is the nature of Brother Castleberry’s first case of “cooperation with denominations.”

The second case is that of the “Sky Pilots of America.” Here Brother Castleberry reaches his greatest height in misrepresenting the facts. I was not acquainted with this organization until I read of it in Brother Castleberry’s article, but I am pleased to know that our auditorium has been used by this group of children. Brother Pepperdine tells me that it is an organization of boys between the ages of nine and twelve whose principal activity is making toy airplanes and a Bible study class. A group of these little boys under the supervision of a young minister and a mechanic, both members of the church of Christ, meet in the basement of Brother Pepperdine’s home every week to make toy airplanes. So this is the second of Brother Castleberry’s “cooperation with denominations”—a group of boys under the supervision of their leaders were given free use of the college auditorium for a program of fun and music. The fact that “Sky Pilot” groups have been formed by many denominational church people should not make the work wrong.

The third case is the matter of chapel speakers. Our policy has been as follows: Brother Pepperdine has Wednesdays as a day to bring a guest speaker. During the year he brings the leading men in the city to the campus—the mayor, business leaders, educators and others. Now and then there is a denominational preacher who has achieved eminence because of some great community service. Once we had the leading Jewish Rabbi in the City of Los Angeles who is very active in patriotic and civic matters, and I believe It was he who spoke of Jewish, Protestant and Catholic cooperation. It should be remembered that these cultural programs follow the worship and are separate from it. On Fridays we frequently have a religious speaker as a part of the worship and these speakers are members of the church. Other days after a brief worship period there may be musical or other cultural programs. This arrangement may or may not be the best possible, but it hardly has anything to do with cooperation with denominations.

Finally, in this, section Brother Castleberry’s statement that “athletic announcements consume far more time than teaching or preaching the gospel is simply another case of deceptive implication. We do not use the chapel period at all for preaching the Gospel in the sense he speaks of, that is, to give a Gospel sermon on first principles, offer the invitation, etc. We believe the preaching of the Gospel in that sense is a function of the church and not of a college chapel. The college chapel is primarily a worship period for the college community as a business might have an hour of quiet or worship and a cultural period. We do not conceive of the college as an adjunct of the church through which the work of the church is done. We conceive of a college as an educational institution set in a Christian environment as a Christian business or a home might be.

That the chapel time is taken up disproportionately of announcements about athletics is simply another error in fact. Athletics struggles for its share of announcements among twenty or more other college activities.

8. The Graphic. The Graphic is our student paper. In any single issue probably from fifteen to thirty students contribute articles ranging from editorials and religious material to reviews of athletic events and of other activities in the city and in the nation. Now there is a difference of opinion as to how severely the student paper should be censured by the administration. The college bulletins are the official publications of the college and, of course, represent the official attitude of the administration and faculty. A student paper represents the opinions of the students, the faculty advisor seeing to it that the student opinion be within the limits of decency and good journalistic taste. He and other faculty members strive to guide student opinion so that it will be wise, balanced and in harmony with Christian principles. Of course, the faculty advisor has the power to forbid the publication of any student article and the administration might, if it considered it necessary, suspend the student paper.

Some things, such as those listed by Brother Castleberry, have appeared in the Graphic due to lack of adequate supervision that should not have appeared. Brother Castleberry calls attention to twenty-one items appearing in twenty-one issues of the Graphic as being objectionable. We also feel that many of these items were objectionable and should not have been printed. However, during the years of 1944, 1945, 1946 and 1947 the student body published approximately 120 issues consisting of four pages each. When one considers that only twenty-one items out of 120 issues have been singled out as objectionable, one can see that the number of mistakes which have been made are very small. We have improved this situation. The lack of proper supervision has been noted by the Policy Committee of the College as well as the administration for some time. Additional staff members have been added so as to guarantee closer supervision and thus bring mistakes of this kind to a minimum. We regret that we did not make this change sooner. However, the paper is still written and published by students, and if a person covers each issue with a fine comb looking for faults, he will likely find some. The items about entertainment quoted were not “Advertisements”, as he states. The paper has never taken that sort of advertising. The items refer-
red to were a mixture of student opinion and quotations and were taken from a column in a local paper by a student who was reviewing happenings in the entertainment world in the city. Since some might be influenced by the column, it should have been supervised more closely.

Reference is made to a list of entertainment places which appeared in a student handbook published by the student organization of the College. The students and faculty advisors who published this handbook simply took a list of places of interest presented by the Chamber of Commerce of Los Angeles and put it in the handbook. Shortly after the handbook appeared someone called our attention to the fact that there were places listed that it would not be wise to recommend. We appreciated this criticism and would have revised the list had the handbook been republished after the mistake was detected.

We regret that the play, “Wary Quarry,” was given and believe a more acceptable play should have been selected. However, we are happy that very few plays have been criticized during the existence of Pepperdine College. It is quite difficult to obtain plays that are not objectionable in part to some people since they do treat with life’s problems and experiences, both good and bad. We strive to select those plays that are entertaining, wholesome and instructive.

9. Dancing at Pepperdine. As all know, the problem of dancing is a very serious one in modern life, even among the churches. A considerable proportion of young people coming from church of Christ homes have danced with the knowledge and encouragement of their parents previous to coming to college. This situation means that these young people will likely continue to engage in this activity when they go back home or when they visit with their friends. It should be clearly understood by all that George Pepperdine College is opposed to dancing. There has never been any dancing on its campus sanctioned by it or as a part of its program, and it is not our plan that there shall be in the future.

As to the reference in Brother Castleberry’s article to the folk games classes, probably most informed people know that nearly all colleges have classes in folk games composed of numerous folk activities, such as “Skip to my Lou,” “Drop the Handkerchief,” “Pig in the Middle,” and various other child games. The purpose of the course is, chiefly, to prepare elementary school teachers to lead children in such activities on playgrounds and wherever they may have responsibility for their supervision. It has been our policy from the very beginning to require decent and appropriate dress for our students. When they are engaged in gymnastic activity and active games, they dress in gym clothes. On the campus and at other places where such clothing would be inappropriate, they do not wear them. I do not mean that some student may not now and then appear dressed in a way that we would not approve, but I am speaking of the policy of the College, and when an individual case arises, we deal with that individually.

Also it should be pointed out that there is a wide difference of opinion among sincere people as to what dress is appropriate. Some people are opposed to any gym clothes for any purpose.

The reference again to the so-called “advertisements” in the Graphic are taken from a student column in which the student was speaking about various entertainment activities in the city. I have covered that in another connection.

10. Lord’s Day at Pepperdine. It has been our consistent policy supported both by the administration and the student organization that there should be no social occasions on Lord’s Day unless adequate and properly supervised provisions were made for worship. Oftentimes groups of our students make a trip to the mountains or to other places of natural beauty on Sunday taking along one of the faculty members who leads them in a worship service and they have a day of fellowship together. Of course, our students may engage in activities on Lord’s Day that we do not approve. More than 800 of our students live off campus and they are at home over the week ends, but they understand our position and policy about respect for the Lord’s Day.

11. Personal Work on Campus. Anyone wishing to know the facts about the incident which Brother Castleberry refers to concerning Brother Otis Gatewood’s class in personal evangelism can, I am sure, secure them from Brother Gatewood. For the record here they are: Brother Gatewood had a good class in personal work and also another group in college who were interested in learning to do personal work. After conferring with the leading faculty members on campus and many ministers of mature judgment, it was decided that it would not be wise for this group of boys and girls to attempt to do personal work on a college campus until they had had somewhat more experience. It was suggested that they do their practicing work in the community under the supervision of some church where they would be less likely to do harm. On a college campus such as ours numerous of the faculty members are discussing religious problems with students constantly and they did not feel that they would like for their work to be interfered with by a group of enthusiastic, well meaning boys and girls who had not had much experience in personal religious work.

It is a simple falsehood that Dean Pullias or any other official at the College has taken the attitude that we do not care about making im—

(See TINER’S ANSWER page 91)
REPLY TO HUGH M. TINER

O. L. CASTLEBERRY

I have carefully read Br. Tiner’s reply to my article. He is quick to question motives and use rash and uncalled-for slurs and revilings. It would have been far better had he either answered the arguments or admitted that conditions at the college are as described. The careful reader will note that he did either admit or avoid much of what I had stated to be true.

1. Bro. Tiner says that my interest in the truth about George pepperdine College grows out of a spirit of ‘bitterness and antagonism. The Lord knows the disposition of my heart in this matter, not Br. Tiner. I am only interested in what affects the church of our Lord. Br. Tiner’s effort in judging my motives will not decide the issues involved. The brethren are not interested in what Bro. Tiner thinks about me personally but whether the facts presented by me are true. Upon this the case must rest. I have dedicated my life to preaching the gospel, defending the truth and exposing error wherever I find it. This is the duty of every Christian.

Br. Tiner asserts that because I was on the campus proper only two months and “have rarely or never been seen on the campus since then” that I would not know whether any changes in improving conditions have been made. This line of reasoning ‘would limit what any of us can know to be true to what we see with our own eyes or personally experienced. Most readers will recognize this to be very poor reasoning. Br. Tiner would do better to deal with the facts than to attempt to cloud the issue.

2. Enrollment

The basis of his own figures my point still stands. The percentage of members of the Church at Pepperdine is less now than in the preceding years. Br. Tiner says the Church on the West Coast “is growing in a gratifying way.” Br. Tiner, WHY isn’t the percentage of Christians who go to Pepperdine growing too, instead of decreasing?

3. Pepperdine’s Financial Support

Financial independence in a school frees it from the necessity of respecting and using views of brethren, even when those views are right. A large endowment also subjects any college to the danger of attracting men of monetary or other motives rather than for pure love of Christian education. Money may be used in many ways to court recognition and standing. Few doors, political, civic or otherwise are closed if enough money is possessed. Pepperdine’s success and recognition from worldly circles in general has not been due to its strong stand for Christ as He has never been received and “recognized” by such people.

Brother Wolfe recently stated a truth that many of us discovered through harsh experience. He stated that when students have given information about immorality in the college instead of going to the roots of the situation the matter is hushed up and the students themselves who gave the information are treated as rank offenders. One recent example was when the blind preacher, John Bessire, called up Dean Pullias to report drinking in the boys’ dormitory. The Dean asked John why he (a recent graduate of the institution) was in the dormitory, and if he had permission to be there. He furthermore asked Bro. Bessire if he came to “snoop” around. He did not and the matter was dropped.

4. Wickedness of Los Angeles and Hollywood

Bro. Tiner says the patrons of the school have been almost unanimous in their praise of the guidance their children have received at the college. I am sure the luke-warmness of the college with regard to sound teaching and discipline would meet the “almost unanimous” approval of most students as nearly 80 per cent of the students are of the world or sectarians. The Student Handbook (page 13) tells why worldly and sectarian people (80 per cent of students) “almost unanimously” approve of the “guidance” they receive in Pepperdine. It reads ‘Pepperdine
is praised and criticized for her spirit of freedom. The campus values highly its wholesome freedom of thought, of action, of conscience.” “We are not constantly told what to do and what not to do. We are expected to do that which we know to be right.”

When sectarian “almost unanimously” approve of the “guidance” they receive at a school run by our brethren there must be something wrong somewhere. The handbook mentioned is the same one which suggests that the students see ‘Earl Carroll’s” the night club, girl show and liquor serving establishment previously mentioned.

The college expects patronage from brethren in this area. ‘However even a casual investigation of the Southern California area will show its influence is far below what it was when the school began.

6. Dean Pullias

In this part Bro. Tiner commits himself to endorsing Pullias’ worship and fellowship with the Christian Church in N. C. It seems that not only was Pullias himself willing to remain with a Christian Church several years, sing with them and take the supper with them, but now President Tiner is going to leave the “wisdom of the effort” and “the good that was done” up to God for judgment. Is it all right for a person who “was reared in the church of Christ” and “taught Bible classes from his youth up” to go into a town where there is no church and go over with the Christian Church for worship? Why didn’t Pullias start a church during his several years there? If he taught the whole truth of God as is claimed, for several years, surely there must have been at least one good soul who saw the light. Who is that one good soul, Bro. Tiner? Why did the two ladies whose addresses are given in my previous article fail to hear Pullias teach that pianos or organs are wrong in worship?

The background and rearing of E. V. Pullias and where he has taught is not the question. Articles have been accepted by our leading journals from Carl Etter and Ernest Beam, men who no longer proclaim the whole council of God. If Bro. Tiner is intimating that the churches he lists endorse E. V. Pullias now he is wrong. E. V. Pullias would not be permitted to speak in some of them now. There is considerable difference in the fact that a man has spoken for a church in the last ten years and whether that man is endorsed by them now.

Bro. Pullias seldom attended the church of Christ in Winston-Salem. He cannot now secure any statement from them saying he was a regular attendant. He remained in Durham and sang with instrumental music in a Modernistic Christian Church which has young people’s meetings with the Baptists. He was very popular with these people and they sing his praises to this day. When a man’s teachings are acceptable to the elders of a modernistic Christian Church, and he is kept by them for several years and elevated to positions of highest acceptance, his teachings must not be sound. When a man will do a thing like that he is not sound. Whether he formally “joined” the Christian Church does not change the situation a particle.

6. Bro. Ralph Wilburn

Bro. Tiner points out some technical errors here in my article. For instance I said Wilburn had a doctor’s degree in philosophy instead of saying a doctor of philosophy degree and called their department of religion a school of religion. These are technical errors and the big play Bro. Tiner makes on them shows he didn’t have any bigger errors to point out. Such things do not touch the issue.

Bro. Tiner expects the brethren to have all their fears put to rest, on the basis of his word, that Dr. Wilburn is all right. He gives us six “Ts” as authority in as many lines. We are expected, apparently, to end all doubts, on his word that “I know he teaches and believes all the fundamental truths of the New Testament.” The fact that honest and reliable brethren have sat in Wilburn’s classes where he teaches his modernism, and then given us the benefit of their knowledge is to be discounted now, because Bro. Tiner has completely settled the matter. I am afraid Bro. Tiner’s assurance will not assuage all the brethren.

President Tiner has talked with students he says, most of whom, no doubt told him that Wilburn taught the truth. That reminds me of a story of a colored man in court, accused of stealing chickens. He said, “I can get a hundred people who didn’t see me steal that chicken.” So Tiner can get many students and members of the church who have never heard Wilburn teach error.

Bro. Wilburn does have great respect for the well known denominational leaders in denominational church history. He refers to the murderous Augustine as a saint. He brings out their false teaching; stresses and impresses it and then fails to refute it or condemn it as false, for his group of students. Occasionally he does say in a low voice, “I can’t quite agree all the way with him there.”

Suppose I should preach like that. Suppose I should preach error on Baptism, that it is not essential, etc. What would be the effect if I left it that way, without refuting it? What kind of an impression does this make on students? His students are disturbed by his presenting error. By not showing them the truth often times he
weakens the faith of the student instead of strengthening it.

Five questions are presented for Dr. Wilburn, the answer to which will help brethren in general to know how he stands. They, are as follows:

1. Do you believe the Bible is verbally inspired?
2. Do you believe a person who is a member of a denomination (Presbyterian, Methodist) can be saved?
3. Do you believe R. H. Boll to be a loyal and devoted Christian, an asset to the body of Christ?
4. Did you hold a meeting for the church in Louisville where Bro. Boll preaches?
5. If you were to do so again would you condemn premillennialism as a wicked, false and divisive doctrine?

7. Cooperation With Denominations

Brother Tiner says the Pepperdine College permitted denominations to hold religious services in their auditorium with the college's consent and approval. This means the college has let denominations have a place to hold services and even participated in the services without once letting it be known that they do not endorse 'what went on. To act as the college has done in this matter is to lend their endorsement and influence to something that is wrong.

The incident of the Greyfriar’s Memorial Church service was as bad as could be and Brother Tiner didn't change the facts one bit by his remarks. The facts are that the college and Dean Pullias endorsed and lent their influence to carry on a Presbyterian church service with a Presbyterian preacher and instrumental music at 7:30 p. m. on Sunday night, not one block from where a congregation of the church was having services. The adornments which Bro. Tiner mentioned as being used in the services didn't change the facts one iota.

sky Pilots

Brother Tiner says I reached my “greatest height of misrepresenting the facts here.” Let us examine the facts themselves to see who did the misrepresenting.

First, he says Sky Pilots of America is a group of innocent little boys whose principle activity is building airplanes and studying the Bible. The bulletin of the organization says “Sky Pilots of America is one of America's newest and most unique Christian Missionary Movements.” The great objectives of Sky Pilots of America is to:

1. Recruit the unchurched, unbelieving boy to accept his rightful Christian place in some American Christian Church regardless of denomination or outside church activities. (Two other objectives are listed also religious objectives.)

The organization developed in “The Sunday School of the Bassettdale Community Church, Puente, California, where Rev. Elmer B. Sachs, the pastor saw the worth and outlined and incorporated the program for a nation-wide missionary movement.”

The bulletin further clarifies the nature of the organization, “Rev. Sachs’s life-time verse will explain WHO is in 'back of the movement. Rom. 8:31 “If God be for us who can be against us.”” Brother Tiner said he was pleased the college auditorium was used for this purpose to recruit the American boy to some American Christian Church regardless of denomination.

2. Under the heading “What is Sky Pilots” (Sky Pilot News, July 15, 1947) we are told “Sky pilots of America is an interdenominational Christian Club for boys ....”. Brother Tiner when an organization is formed by denominational people with a religious objective do you think it right to endorse and aid it?

3. Brother Tiner stresses three times that the group is composed of little boys. One time he quotes Bro. Pepperdine as saying their ages are from 9 to 12. The Sky Pilot News says that Pepperdine has a squad which meets on Thursdays at night. Brother Tiner has previously remarked that Pepperdine College has achieved considerable recognition academically. Their achievements are even more spectacular when one considers the age of these students must be.

Brother Tiner said I misrepresented the facts. He either didn’t know and without full knowledge accused me of misrepresenting things or else he knew the facts and lied. I prefer to believe he didn’t know all the facts. It is a common practice for him to shout that all unfavorable facts are “misrepresentations, without foundation and mere rumors.”

President Tiner simply admits that the college does use denominational preachers in its chapel frequently as a college policy. He further admits that error is taught by these men and that one case in point is when a Jew spoke on brotherhood. Does Brother Tiner believe in brotherhood between Jews, Catholics and Christians? He says that on Fridays they use a member of the church sometimes but that the speaker’s time is not used at all for preaching the gospel, that is to tell people how to be saved, etc. It looks like that with all these other things around a little gospel preaching wouldn’t be out of order.

The sectarians can come and go but a gospel preacher can’t come there to hold a two weeks meeting. Which would do the most good, denominational speakers or gospel preachers? Brethren are not so much interested in the claims of this school as in what it is actually doing.

The college “presented” a program of Catholic boys from Boy’s Town. According to the Graphic, Oct. 10, 1947 “Boy’s Town was founded
by the Right Rev. E. J. Flannigan.” This was “presented” by Pepperdine under the direction of “Father Francis Schmitt.”

8. The Graphic

Here Bro. Tiner would have the readers believe that there were single out as objectionable in the school paper were that could have been single out. Bro. Tiner, there are as many as 20 objectionable items in two issues and almost as many as others. In the last six months notices have appeared suggesting programs for students to see dancing, wear shorts and view Catholic sponsored activities. In the last six months preachers have been referred to as “Right Reverend, Reverend, and Father.” Christmas has been termed in an editorial of the paper as the birthday and memorial day for the birth of Christ. It looks like you should add a few more staff members to supervise the thing.

Brother Tiner says “many of the items I listed as objectionable should not have appeared. This means some of those I listed should have appeared or were all right. I wonder which ones were all right, those about immorality, sex, dancing or immodest dress?

He says the college paper has never taken advertisements of the sort I mentioned. Let us examine the paper to see what kind of advertisements it has accepted.

1. February 19, 1947-A large picture of a dance orchestra leader and a smaller group of jitter-bug dancers is shown. This was to illustrate the intended use of the dance records the students were expected to buy. They were advertised to be “new trends in torrid tempos.”

2. April 30, 1947 “Popularity in a Package”, showing ball-room dancing. This was to illustrate to the prospective buyer of the records that dancing to these records would make the student more popular.

3. April 30, 1947 (and many other issues) Hair tinting for the girls.

4. April 23, 1947 A downtown store has a part of its advertisement in the Pepperdine school paper that a girl whose name is given can assist the students in how to dress for dancing or other occasions.

It would appear that a school which is “reasonably well endowed” could have called in a handbook which recommended a night club with a sexy girl show and drinking as a place for the students to go. It seems that this could have been done immediately, on finding it out. It is strange that such a place ever got into the handbook for students who are to live in a “whole-some Christian Environment.” Attention was called to this in early 1945 and nothing was done about it.

Bro. Tiner considers it quite difficult to obtain plays that are not objectionable to “some people” as the plays must treat of life’s “experienc- es good and bad.” It is not necessary for a college to select plays that treat of the sordid and immoral side of life as some Pepperdine plays have done.

9. Dancing at Pepperdine

I refer readers to my previous references on dancing to determine whether Pepperdine College is opposed to dancing as Bro. Tiner says. The folk games class is referred to as a dancing class by those who participate in it. Not all these dances are as innocent as the one Bro. Tiner mentions “Drop the Handkerchief.” Neither does this explain the common announcements of different types of dancing so often in the school paper for such a long period of time. My statements about indecent dress are not refuted by Bro. Tiner’s “explanations.”

10. Lord’s Day at Pepperdine

I again refer the readers to my previous quotation. Bro. Tiner says that students often engage in activities the college does not approve. When the basketball team played Clifton’s on March 9, 1947, was this without the approval of the college? What is done about violations which desecrate the Lord’s Day besides giving those who do it a big newsy write-up in the Graphic?

11. Personal Work on the Campus

My statements about the experience of Otis Gatewood when he tried to do organized personal work on the campus of Pepperdine College were read by Bro. Gatewood and were printed with his knowledge and approval. Since the college has no gospel meetings as such, allows no personal work by a recognized authority on the subject among its students, permits no gospel preaching of first principles in the chapel, and allows sectarian preachers and at least one faculty member to teach the errors of men without refuting them it is no wonder that even the faith of the strong is often shaken at this college. Bro. Tiner says he conferred with flesh and blood and then determined it would not be wise to let Bro. Gatewood and his helpers teach the Gospel of Christ to the lost at Pepperdine.

Bro. Tiner labels me a liar, a sorehead in general, a disgruntled and unhappy student for going to him and offering criticisms of the school. The quickest way to receive Bro. Tiner’s tongue lashing, if not his physical lashing, is to fail to fall in line with his ideas of the soundness of the school. I talked with him in a positive way but I was not discourteous nor have I ever been to him. I repeated my own experiences just as numerous others have done and pointed out the

(See REPLY TO TINER page 13)
SOME TEACHERS AT GEORGE PEPPERDINE REVEAL THEIR ATTITUDE
ROY E. COGDILL

There follows this statement a report of a meeting held at Long Beach, California, on December 2, 1947. This report of the meeting is signed and verified by twelve Gospel preachers who for the most part live in this area. A copy of the report was placed in the hands of W. B. West, head of the Department of Religion of George Pepperdine College, and the men who teach at Pepperdine who were in the meeting have seen the report and were invited to write whatever they had to say about it and send it to us. We have had nothing from them in any way retracting the things that they said in the meeting at that time or modifying them. They must be accepted therefore not only as a correct report of what was said but as correctly setting forth their views concerning these matters.

On Tuesday, December 2, 1947, the preachers of the Los Angeles and Long Beach areas met in the Y. W. C. A. with Brother Harrison as Chairman of the meeting. About thirty-five or forty were present at the meeting including some ‘elders and ladies. Among the preachers present were: James O. Wilburn, E. R. Watson, Roy Tidwell, Hoyt Houchen, Gus Eoff, W. E. Irvine, Bud Irvine, Joe Gilmore, Jack Hardcastle, Morgan Harlan, Wade Ruby, Hubert Derrick, Woodrow Whitten, L. Castleberry, Roy E. Cogdill, Bro. Harriman, Marion Davis and Carroll Cannon.

According to previous appointment Roy E. Cogdill spoke to the group on the theme “What Should We Preach?” which theme was requested. In the speech emphasis was given to the charge “Preach the Word.” It was pointed out that the “faith” was a definite system of teaching, that there is one faith and but one, that has been delivered to the saints of God once for all, that to preach any other doctrine brings condemnation upon the man who does so and will lead any who hear and believe into condemnation.

When the speech had been concluded, in accordance with the customary procedure in these meetings, the meeting was turned into a round table discussion and questions were asked.

In the discussion that followed the statements below were made by the individuals to whom they are attributed. These are not given in verbatim as to the exact words used but they represent correctly and exactly the substance of the things said.

Wade Ruby: Man can learn of God through other means than by divine revelation or though His Word. As proof of this Brother Ruby offered Rom. 1:20 “for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God.”

When questioned further about his ideas concerning this matter, Brother Ruby said: Man has come to know ‘God in his heathen state without ever having seen or heard of the Bible and to worship God as the result. Even the American Indian worshiped God before the word of God was proclaimed in this country when he was worshipping the sun.

Woodrow Whitten: Jesus gathered some of his teachings such as the things he taught in the sermon on the mount, the golden rule for instance, from human philosophers who had lived prior to his day.

It was pointed out to him that Jesus said, “I speak not of myself: I speak only where the
father has spoken”, and he was asked whether
or not he believed that Jesus taught anything
that originated with human philosophers rather
than with God. This question he refused to ans-
swer forthrightly and directly.

At this point Brother Ruby entered the dis-
cussion again and said that: Some of the things
that Jesus taught can be learned by human ex-
perience, that is, man can discover for himself.
He gave as examples of this-humility-and the
golden rule.

When it was pointed out to him that Paul
said, “Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law:
for I had not known lust, except the law had
said, Thou shalt not covet”, and that man in his
heathen state did not know or observe moral
principles and could not know the difference be-
tween that which was right or wrong except as
God has revealed it, he insisted that the passage
cited was misapplied and that man can discover
and know moral principles without the aid of di-
vine revelation.

Wade Ruby, Hubert Derrick, Woodrow Whitten—all three: There are some of God’s children
-Christians-Members of the Lord’s Church—
people who have obeyed the Gospel in human
denominations-Methodists, Baptist, etc. Brother
Whitten cited his father who is in the Baptist
church and said that he wouldn’t judge him.

Brother Ruby said further on this point: They
are children of God-Christians-even though
they are in denominationalism. They are in error,
of course, and whether or not God will save them
in their error depends on the attitude of their
hearts. All three of these brethren definitely took
the attitude that we cannot positively know the
truth but that we might be mistaken and to con-
demn those in error Ys to sit in judgment upon
them. Their plea was “let us not sit in the
Judge’s seat.”

Brother Hubert Derrick expressed himself as
thinking that we should not let the difference in the way we regard things alienate us. He put
differences in attitude toward God, divine
revelation, the church, etc., on the basis of the
difference in attitude toward the one cup idea,
war question, etc. He gave emphasis to the fact
that he believed baptism for the remission of
sins and was asked if he regarded that truth as
more essential and important than the truths
concerning the Church, its organization, its
name, its work, and worship. In reply he said
that he could not be too positive about these
matters concerning the Church any more than
he could about how the Holy Spirit operates. If
he dissented on any point with reference to those
things advocated by the other brethren, Ruby
and Whitten, he failed to let it be known but
rather gave the impression that he was in com-
plete harmony with them frequently nodding his
head in assent while they were talking.

The above represents as correctly as the mat-
ters could be stated the attitudes expressed and
the statements made in the discussion in this
meeting without giving them in the exact words
used. I heard it all, listened carefully, and give
my unqualified endorsement to the correctness of
this report.

Signed by:
O. L. Castleberry
Marion F. Davis
Jack Hardcastle
Hoyt H. Houchen
Roy Tidwell
W. C. Harrison
Joe Gilmore, Jr.
John W. Baker
H. M. Harriman
W. E. Irvine
Wm. S. Irvine
Roy E. Cogdill

That the statements contained in the above
report were made by men who profess to be
Gospel preachers and who are teaching in a
college that advertises and features its school
of religion, Christian teaching and influence, and invites Christian parents to send their children
there for ‘Christian Education” and young Gos-
pel preachers to come and finish their education
is absolutely astounding to our readers I am
sure.

Some time ago an article was published by the
Bible Banner from the pen of Brother John
Wolfe concerning the conditions that exist at
Pepperdine. Brethren were astonished at that
article. It was reprinted in last month’s issue of
the Bible Banner and along with it the reply of
Brother Tiner to Brother Wolfe. It is even more
astonishing that brethren connected with the
school instead of trying to correct the condition
that exists there will actually try to defend it.
That their defense is too flimsy for words goes
without saying for those who read Brother
Tiner’s attempt at reply and Brother Wolfe’s ans-
ter to that reply.

Their efforts to explain away, discredit, and
justify the criticisms brought against them only
corroborates the criticism. Those who know
Brother John Wolfe will not question his veracity
as to the facts.

The facts in the above report cannot be ques-
tioned by those who want to honestly face the
truth. The statements are honestly and accurate-
ly reported and they speak for themselves. Let
us look at the substance of them.

1. Man can discover and know God through
nature without Divine Revelation.

2. Man in his heathen state without ever hav-
ing come in contact with the Bible has come to
know God and worship God. When the American
Indian worshipped the sun—that was worshipp-
ing God—to him.

3. Jesus gathered some of his teaching from human philosophers who lived before his day. The “Golden Rule” is cited as an example of this.

4. Man can learn through his own experience the principles of moral character and come to know the difference between right and wrong and can learn moral principles without the aid of divine revelation.

5. God has some children in denominations today and we have no right to sit in the “Judge’s Seat” and say they won’t and can’t be saved therein.

6. We should not and cannot be too positive about such matters as the manner in which the Holy Spirit operates, the identity of the Church, etc.

7. We should not allow differences such as exist in our attitude toward the necessity of divine revelation in knowing God and learning his Church; differences concerning the manner of the Church; differences concerning the manner of the Spirit’s operation; to alienate us and disturb our fellowship.

To attempt to argue the falsity of such statements before the readers of the Bible Banner or any audience made up of people who believe the Bible to be the Word of God would be a reflection on their intelligence as well as their convictions. These statements dispute every principle of divine truth that I have been taught from my childhood and for which I have tried to contend through more than twenty-five years of Gospel preaching. They do not represent the convictions of the Churches of Christ but deny them. They dispute the very faith for which we have been contending in our efforts to further the cause of New Testament Christianity in the world. They nullify every stand made by Gospel preachers in the years of the past in their battles against infidelity and denominationalism. They make ridiculous every sacrifice that has been made by faithful Christian men and women of the Church through the years. They brand our preaching, our worship, our very existence as a religious body of people as vain. They dispute every truth fundamental to the very identity of the Body of Christ and deny what the Bible teaches at every point. That men who believe such should be accepted and used in the pulpits of the Churches of the Lord and should teach our young people and our young Gospel preachers, that they should even be held in fellowship with those who are “contending for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints” is almost unthinkable.

That is strong language, brethren, but this isn’t a personal matter. These things very vitally affect the very future and life of the Church. Already the influence of such teaching is being felt. There are churches in the area of southern California where such teaching is being done that will fellowship anything and do not draw the line against error at all. If such corrupt teaching is countenanced within the church it will be only a matter of time until many others will become so weak and soft that they will do likewise. Educate our young people and our young preachers under such teaching as this and the Church of the next generation will suffer untold injury as the result. The souls of men and the future of the Church is the price to be paid for tolerating such error. What should be done? The faithful elders of the Church of our Lord, with the faithful Gospel preachers, and the devoted members of the congregations throughout the land should refuse to countenance such men and their teaching lest we become a “partaker of their evil works.”

I had heard rumors and was disturbed but when such statements came to my own ears from the mouths of these men themselves, I was so astonished that I said, “Brethren, it is apparent to me that instead of just one modernist on the faculty of Pepperdine College, they have a whole nest full of infidelity up there”. That is my conviction about the matter. If these statements cannot correctly be described by that term what would you call it?

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When it is said one is a Christian, the thought is conveyed that the one referred to is a follower of Christ—that he believes Christ is the savior and subscribes to his teaching without any reservations, and embodies in his life the principles of Christ's teaching in all relationships.

I do not recall that human slavery is specifically condemned in the New Testament, yet I am persuaded that the principles of the teaching of Christ led to the freeing of the slaves in our country.

The New Testament does not give the “blue prints” by which we are to build our residences; yet in building them the Christian follows the principles of Christ in building, as does the workman in the construction of the house.

The store-keeper, if he is a Christian, follows the principles of Christ, in dealing with his customers—honest dealing, and truthful representations.

Though the New Testament does not specify in what particular field of human endeavor a man engages, it does demand that he work and provide for those who are dependent on him; and have to give to the work of the Master.

Christians not only sustain a relationship to the Lord; but being a citizen in the country in which they live sustain a relationship to that country-citizens with whom they associate.

The church is in no sense a worldly institution. It is not the business of the church to enter the marts of the world in an effort to make money—it is not the business of the church to become a competitor in the business world. Rather the church gives of its money to help suffering humanity, and to preach the gospel.

The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. 3:15.) I think it would be well if many who are members of the church would give serious study to the foregoing passage; and in connection therewith it will be well to remember: “Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Cor. 10:31.)

The first work of the church is to preach the gospel. He who thinks the physical demands of humanity come first in importance has not learned the first lesson of the Scriptures. By way of comparison the physical life, and blessings for the physical man sink into insignificance compared with the spiritual. If needs be one must sacrifice his physical life, rather than deny the Lord. It is more important to maintain your faithfulness to the Lord than to preserve your physical life.

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