THE CHURCH AND WORLDLINESS--NO. 1

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(A sermon delivered at the Lufkin, Texas, Church of Christ, Oct. 12, 1947.)

'One of the common problems that confronts people today in the living of the Christian life is the problem that has sometimes been put in the term of "Worldliness." I'd like to call it Christian Recreation, and view it more from the positive side than from the other. Let us consider the question: What kind of recreation is permissible in the Christian life? What can a Christian do in the way of entertainment, or recreation, without sinning?

I am conscious as I study this question with you upon this occasion that there are a number of personal questions and problems, perhaps, in the minds of everyone of us concerning the very things that we should talk about, and also that there are, perhaps, upon the part of everyone of us questions that are due to personal relationships that are sustained. But the answer to this problem and the solution to it cannot be determined upon the basis of personal relationships any more than any other question of the truth. It isn't a question of likes or dislikes. It isn't a question of preference or anything of that kind. It is not a question of any grudge that we might bear, because that does not have anything to do with determining the right or the wrong of any matter. It is purely and only a question of how I may determine whether or not a practice that is before me in life, about which I have to render a decision, can be engaged in without violating any principle of God's righteousness. If it does violate a principle of righteousness, then it is wrong. To engage in it will condemn me whether I like to do it, or do not like it; whether it is a matter of preference with me or principle. Principles of righteousness violated determine sin. You and I need constantly to keep ourselves concerned with whether or not we are living in keeping with the principles of the righteousness of God. If we do, we are Pleasing in God's sight. Otherwise, we stand condemned, and rob ourselves of the hope of heaven after a while.

A lot of people want to determine the question of where they can go and what they can engage in purely upon the basis of what they like. I know a man who thinks that a football game is born of the devil, but a rodeo was sent down from heaven. He doesn't like one, but he does like the other. He tries to determine whether they are right...
or wrong upon the basis of his own attitude toward it, and of course, that doesn't determine anything with reference to its being right or wrong. **Whether** I like it or don't like it, that ought to be simply put out of my mind as I try to reach a solution to this problem that perhaps confronts people as universally who are interested in doing right **as** any other problem that might be thought about.

Then there are those who have the idea that if they can get somebody's approval for the things they want to do, **that** if they can simply get somebody to say that it is all right, that that would make the thing entirely permissible and acceptable. They go about asking people, "What do you think about this?" **Or,** "What do you think about that?" Frequently that question is raised without an honest and sincere, earnest desire upon the part of the individual who asks for information. More often when we **ask,** "What do you **think** about it," we are asking for approval **We** simply want somebody to approve the thing that we want to do. We are seeking for self-justification. I know of a man who went to the **preacher** of a certain Texas church not too long 'ago, and ask of 'him **that** he get the elders together so that he might talk to them. The **preacher** was a little interested in what **the** man had in mind. He came to find out that the man had this in his mind. He had divorced his **wife,** He wanted to marry **again,** and he wanted to get the consent or approval of the elders of the church to do so. **The** preacher told him that the elders of the church did not have any jurisdiction in the matter, that they were not legislators, and what they said about it would not have anything to do with its being right or **wrong.** **The** man said, "I thought that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word can be established." His idea was that if I could just get two or three to agree, and to approve the thing that I want to do, that would make it right, no matter what God said about it.

The popularity of a thing, the fact that everybody is practicing it **does** not mean that it is right. **It might be** the most popular practice in town. **Every** civic club in town might sponsor it and 'approve it, and it might meet with the approval of all of the people in town, and yet it might be utterly wrong in the sight of God. If a practice violates the principles of God's righteousness it **is** wrong, even though the whole world does approve it. Getting the approval of the world would not alleviate the wrong that would be done, or eliminate It to the least degree. The fact of the whole matter is that popular approval is more often on the side of wrong doing than it is on the side of right doing. To prove that it is acceptable in the sight of the world would more often prove that **it** is wrong in the sight of God, for the **Bible** teaches that friendship with the world is enmity against God.

I need to recognize this: that the only way by which the **solution** can be found, the only way that the problem can be solved, in my mind and correctly, actually and truly, is to learn what are the principles of righteousness that govern me in the decision that I shall make. It isn't a question of what I want, or what I prefer. It isn't a question of what somebody else might approve. It isn't even a question of what somebody, like the preacher of the church or the elders of the church, might tell me is right. They have not the **authority** to act as legislators in such matters, but the question is: 'What has God said about it? How may I determine for myself what is right or wrong?''

Back when bobbed hair was first becoming common 'among the ladies, there was a certain woman who wrote a certain preacher, and she raised the question: Is it right **for a woman to bob** her hair? And along with 'it she wanted to know about bridge playing. Is it right for a woman to bob her hair and play bridge? She put down at the bottom of the letter a footnote, and the footnote read **like** this. She said: "Please understand that I want to do both." She was afraid **that** he might misunderstand what she was asking for. And that is the disposition that people frequently have in asking questions.
of that kind.

I stayed in a very nice home one time during a meeting, and the lady in that home asked me the question before I had been there very long what I thought about playing bridge. She told me she was a member of a Tuesday Bridge Club among the ladies of the town, that each one of them paid in weekly dues, and that out of these weekly dues, the prize was bought, and that prize was given to the winner. She was not asking for information that I could give her, but she was asking for approval. That's one meeting I held in which I actually lost weight, and didn't get enough to eat during the rest of the meeting, because she was displeased with the answer that I gave. I found out a long time ago that people are not always asking for information when they ask you about a thing. What we need to do, instead of seeking the approval of somebody for the things that we are interested in, and about which problems arise, is simply study the word of God. There are those who are pleased to make rules for us along this line. There are those who have the attitude and the idea that it is all right for the preacher to decide, fix out a schedule for us, and tell us where we can go and where we can't go. Likewise, for the elders to tell us where we can go and where we can't go, and that that settles and determines the matter once and for all. It doesn't settle anything. The elders and the preacher have no more right to write for you a creed to live by than they do to write for you a creed to teach by, or believe by. It is as essential and necessary for God to decide the one as it is for God to decide the other. God's word and God's will then is the ruling factor in all problems of this kind.

When we begin to think about questions of worldliness, and what is right and what is wrong, we need to remember that God has not specifically legislated with reference to all the many things about which questions might arise in our minds and hearts. He has not decreed that we cannot do this, and we cannot do that. The Bible would be so voluminous if God had undertaken to deal with every problem and with all of the questions that arise, it would be too voluminous even for us to read it in a lifetime, much less to remember all that it might say. If a man memorized every statute that the legislature wrote, and failed to discern, understand, and appreciate the principles of law, even if he did know the law, 'about every time that the legislature met it would repeal about 90 percent of everything that he knew, and he'd be left utterly stranded again. Principles are the important thing. Frequently people say, 'Where has God prohibited the matter? Where has God said that It is wrong? 'Where does the Bible teach that it is right?' They expect God to deal specifically with all of the various questions that arise, and to either directly-authorize it, or to directly disapprove and prohibit. We need to remember that the Bible has not been written upon that kind of a basis. God has revealed His word upon the basis of principles, and it is up to us to learn the principles, and make the proper application of them in our own lives, individually and personally.

What are some of the principles? We are interested in finding out, in getting into our minds and upon our hearts the principles of God's righteousness, which, if properly applied will solve the problem along this line for us. It doesn't matter to what they might be applied, the principles are the same. It doesn't matter whether you apply them to a game of tiddledy winks, or to dancing, or drinking, or whatever else you might apply them to. The same principles will solve every problem that arises and will help you to determine for yourself individually as God intends for you to do exactly whether or not a thing is right or wrong.

The first principle that I want you to think with me about and remember is this: Does it destroy your identity as a Christian by causing you to be regarded as of the world? Does it classify you with the world instead of with Christ and the church? Whatever the practice may be, it doesn't matter to what you give Et application, the question that will help you, one question that will help you to determine whether or not that practice is right or wrong is: Does it classify me with the world? Will it destroy my influence as a Christian? Will it cause people to classify me with the world instead of with Christ and the church?

DRINKING

Now there are a lot of things that would be very definite in their effect from that point of view. For example: If you were to see a man drinking liquor, I don't care what kind or where, if you were to see a man drinking liquor, you wouldn't think: "Now that man must be a Christian!" It simply would not have that effect. The effect that it would have would be this: That man belongs to the world. That man is not serving Christ. That man is not a servant of God, That man is not a child of God. That man, if he is a Christian, if he professes to be a Christian, if he is a member of the church, is not very sincere in it. He isn't living up to it. And so if you thought of him in connection with Christianity and the church at all, it would be by way of reflection upon it, casting a cloud upon the church as a result of the thing that he practiced.

GAMBLING

The same thing would be true of gambling. If you were to see a man gambling, it would not
make any difference what the circumstances were, it wouldn’t make any difference what the stakes were, do you know that the principle is the same whether it is a 5c slot machine, or a two dollar bet on a horse race, or a ten dollar bet on a baseball or football game, or a thousand dollar bet on the election. It doesn’t matter. The principle of gambling is the same whatever the amount of the stakes is. And it is rather astonishing to me, in spite of the fact that everyone recognizes gambling has always belonged to the devil’s crowd, It has always belonged to the world. It has always been identified with sin and unrighteousness, and never with Christ and the church, Yet people today are caused to look lightly upon it, and the practice is becoming more and more common in places of respectability, in high places among us. Various civic organizations think nothing about raffling off a car, or gambling sums of money, somewhere and in some way, and get out and expect the business people of the town, even those who respect the Lord and who are inclined to do his will, to buy a chance on an automobile, or a chance at something else. It hasn’t been very long ago since two young ladies, down in the center of Lufkin, in the business district, stopped and asked me if I would like to make some kind of a contribution to a bingo game. They were to have a bingo table at a school carnival, and by playing bingo and giving away prizes to those who held the lucky numbers, they were to raise money for a certain thing, Now what is the difference between that and a roulette wheel? What is the difference in that and a gambling casino, or any other kind of gambling? What would be the difference between taking a chance in a bingo game where I get some kind of prize, and taking a chance in a poker game? What would be the difference in the principle? The difference is exactly none. Gambling is wrong. It has always been wrong, and never has it been looked upon with any respectability whatsoever upon the part of those who love the Lord and are members of the church. The attitude of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ toward it has not changed. Not one whit, and it would not matter if all the world gave approval to it. Even if those in high places in religious affairs did it, Christians would have to take the same attitude toward it: that it belongs to the devil and his crowd, and to those who are serving him, not the Lord. There isn’t any place to stop and the evils of it are too well known for me to stop to argue that question. The question doesn’t need arguing. It needs honesty in dealing with it. I know that sometimes even in the realm of religion approval is given to it. For example: Catholicism. They have given their approval. The Catholic Church, over and over, has actually participated in it, given it their approval and endorsement. I can point out instance after instance where the Episcopal Church has done exactly the same thing. I think it was at Galveston, not long ago, when the question of horse racing or gambling was being brought before the legislature of the state of Texas, the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese, Byrnes, said that gambling in the State of Texas was all right, and gambling or horse racing was all right. So if a man is looking for some kind of religion that will give him just plenty of latitude and the Bishop would endorse a thing of that kind, well, perhaps that’s where he ought to land. But if you are interested in what is right in the sight of God, in what the Lord approves, in what Christian men and women have always approved and respected as right, and that which would not violate any principle of righteousness, then you’d have to look farther than that. The New Testament teaches along that line what it has always taught, that a man ought to work with his hands, that he might have to give to them that are in need, And any time a man engages in a game of chance that does not require honest, earnest industry and in which he has the chance to profit inordinately at somebody else’s loss, the principle of Christianity has been violated all the way through, and God is displeased, whether religion approves it and whether the world looks upon it with favor or not. It belongs definitely to the world.

DANCING

The same thing is true exactly of dancing. Dancing has never belonged in the realm of Christian activity. The testimonials against it are too many, the evidence is too strong, the fruit of it has been too destructive through the years. You and I know that through the generations of the past, the teaching of the word of God along that line has remained exactly the same. If you were to see one of the elders of the church upon the dance floor at the next one you attend, what would your attitude toward it be? Would you go away and say that he is bound to be a good Christian man in whom I ought to have confidence, because I saw him dancing? ‘Certainly not! You would go away and say that fellow doesn’t have any business being an elder in the church. Why? Because I saw him out there doing a thing that no elder of the church ought to do. That would be your attitude, and even the dancing members of the church know that that would be their attitude toward it. I said a few things not long ago in Houston along the line of dancing, and why the dance is wrong, preaching particularly on that, and a young man came around to me after the service was over and said: “I don’t like what you had to say about dancing.” I said, “Well, that doesn’t necessarily mean that it isn’t so. Just because you don’t like it doesn’t mean that it necessarily isn’t so, and that I
was wrong about it. You should stop and investigate the matter anyhow, even if you don’t like it.” He said, “I think it is all right to dance.” I said, “All right for whom? Now who are you talking about? Do you think it is all right for the preacher? Do you? Do you think the preacher will be respected, that anybody would respect him if he went? He has as much business going as you do.” “Sure,” he said. “Do you mean that it is all right for the elders of the church? Is that what you mean? That it is all right for the preachers and the elders of the church to go? Why, you would go away and talk about them, if you saw them at the next one you attend, and you wouldn’t have any confidence in them. If you had a dancing preacher and a group of dancing elders, you wouldn’t call upon them for comfort and consolation, and for help when the trials and tribulations of life come. You wouldn’t have any confidence in them. But you say it is all right to dance. You mean it is all right for me? You mean it is all right for the whole church? Why not next Wednesday night, let us just roll the benches back and have one here in one of the back rooms, when prayer meeting is over. It is all right for us to get together and do anything else that is all right. It would be all right for us to get together and have dinner. The members of the church do that when the service is over. It would be all right for the members of the church to get together and do anything else that is respectable. Now why not just have a dance next Wednesday evening when prayer meeting is over?”

There is not a dancing member of the church of the Lord in the whole country that would be willing to see that thing happen. We just don’t want it. We know that it doesn’t belong there. We know the connection would be bad. We know the church would be brought into it. We know that reflection would be cast upon the church of Christ and the religion of Christ. We know that great harm would be done. You know, when people say that it is all right to dance, they usually mean that they think it is all right for them to dance, they wouldn’t want everybody doing it, but they think it would be all right for them. That is usually what they mean. You don’t have a lot of privileges like that which other members of the church cannot exercise, and you are not living by a different standard than the rest of us. You are walking by the same rule that the rest of us are walking by, and if it is all right for you to drink beer and gamble, and if it is all right for you to dance, then it is all right for any other member of the church to dance, as far as ‘God’s attitude is concerned. So let us have a dancing, beer drinking, gambling congregation, and see how much good we will do toward saving the souls of men and being respected by them.

Sometimes people say to me, “Brother Cogdill, do you think it would be wrong for a man to dance with his own wife at home?” Now who ever heard of one doing that? Now honestly, when did you ever hear of one doing that? If the man couldn’t dance with the other fellow’s wife he wouldn’t have an interest in dancing, would he? Let me tell you what you do. You just let the boys dance together and the girls dance together, or let every boy dance with his own sister, and every man with his own wife, and see how long your dancing lasts. I have heard of people who love it, but they don’t love it enough to put it on that basis. That shows you where the foundation of it is. When you stop promiscuous association among the sexes, letting a man dance with any woman that he can get to dance with him, when you stop that, dancing ‘with somebody besides his own wife, sister, or mother, you will kill dancing as dead as a hammer, and there isn’t a honky-tonk in this country that could promote another one if you put it on that basis. You know that is so. I don’t need to argue with you on that point. That shows you what the basis of it really is. Fundamentally, there the basis of it is exposed.

Now I say to you that these things are positive in the influence that they have, because they violate not only the first principle, but nearly every principle of righteousness. You will find these things that we are talking about an absolute violation of many of the principles of righteousness.

Does it classify you with the world or the church? Now if you saw a man going to prayer meeting, going to Bible class, going down and helping somebody that is in need, taking some food to the hungry and some clothing to the naked, helping somebody that is in ‘trouble; if you saw a man doing things of that kind, if you knew he was a member of the church, you would think religion means something to him because he is demonstrating it. But if you see a man that professes to be a Christian, a member of the church, engaging in dancing, drinking or gambling, what effect would it have? Why the effect will be that that fellow is a mighty poor sort of a Christian. There isn’t much to him when it comes to religion. I would be afraid to put too much confidence in him. That is the affect. That classifies him with the world. Let us get the passage. In II Cor. 6:14, the Apostle Paul said: “Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath right- eousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?” Then he quotes this passage from the Old Testament: “Wherefore, Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, And touch no unclean thing; And
I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting it

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of your mind, that ye may be able to demonstrate what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." That you may be able to demonstrate. Do you get the idea? Paul said, "Do not be made like unto the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may be able to demonstrate what is the good and perfect will of God." A Christian is to be a living demonstration. That's the idea of that passage. The word "prove" in that passage is an unfortunate translation, because the word "prove" has changed its meaning. Today when you and I think about proving a thing, we think about putting it on the board, showing the facts concerning it, or orally arguing it, or proving it by evidence. But that isn't the sense of that word in the passage at all. The sense of it is demonstration. I am to be a living demonstration by the renewing of my mind, keeping fresh in my mind what is the will of God. I am to be a living
demonstration of it, and that is exactly what God expects me as a Christian to do. Whenever I become so much like the world, going to all of the places to which the world goes, practicing everything the world practices, or anything that the world engages in that has the affect of destroying my influence as a Christian and classifying me with the world, then I have done wrong. I need carefully to guard my life lest I might destroy my influence where I go and be classified with the world rather than with Christ and the church.

The second principle is this: Is the practice questionable in your own mind, and therefore an offense to your own conscience? Bornetimes people say, “Do you think it is wrong to do a certain thing?” Now one of the answers to that question might be found by simply turning it around: Do you think it is ‘wrong’? If you think it is wrong then you cannot do it. Why? Because you will violate your conscience if you do. If you do a thing that you think is wrong, you are going contrary to conscience, and when you go contrary to your conscience you sin before God. The Bible abundantly teaches that. Let us get the passage. In Romans 14, the Apostle Paul is talking about the eating of meats, that had been sacrificed unto idols. You are familiar with the practice. They offered an animal as a sacrifice to an idol god. The body of that animal was not wholly consumed in the sacrifice. The part of it that was not burned up in the sacrifice they took down to what we would call the meat market. They called it the “shambles.” They sold it down there for food. Among the members of the body of Christ, a lot of Christians were going down there and buying that meat for food and taking it back home and eating it. Some of them had said, ‘Why, that has been dedicated unto an idol god, and when you eat that meat you are eating a thing that belongs to an idol. You are therefore, respecting the idol.” Paul said, “That idol god isn’t anything. It’s just a pile of stone. There isn’t anything alive about it. There isn’t any personality there. It is not a living god at all. He is just a stone god, and therefore is no god at all.” A man ought to be able to understand that, and a man ought to be able to eat of the meat without any regard for an idol god in his mind, without any respect for the idol. “Sanctify it unto God through thanking and prayer,” that you do not offend your own conscience in it. That is what Paul taught about it. But he said in Romans 14, right on that point: “So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. Overthrow not for meat’s sake the work of God. All things indeed are clean; howbeit it is evil for that’ man
that eateth with offense. It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth. The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God. Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he approveth. But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (Romans 14:19-23)

Now there is the principle. It does not say that if a man’s conscience approves a certain thing that makes it right. Lets get that point settled to begin with. Your conscience is not to determine what is right and what is wrong. Your intelligence does that. There are various functions of the human heart, various parts of the heart that perform different functions. There is, for example, the intellect, the intelligence that tells you what is right. With the intelligence a man understands and a man believes. But not only does he have intellect. A man has will power. And the will power decides, purposes and determines. That is another function of the heart. Therefore another part of the heart, according to the Bible. Then the heart has not only intellect and will power, but the heart has emotions, and these emotions are such as loving in the heart, and sorrowing in the heart, and rejoicing in the heart, the emotions of the individual. That is the idea. Hut none of those is the conscience. There is a fourth function that the heart of man performs, and that is the function of the conscience. It is not a function of the conscience to tell us what is right. The intellect does that. It is not a function of the conscience to exercise will power, and make choices for us. That is not what the conscience is. It is not the function of the conscience to enjoy emotional responses. What is the function of the conscience? The function of the conscience is to preserve self-respect by reminding me of my duty to do the thing that is right. My conscience reminds me to do the thing that is right. It reminds me not to do the things that are wrong. If I do the things that I understand to be right, my conscience will approve. If I do the thing that I understand to be wrong, my conscience will reprove. If I do the thing that I understand to be right, my conscience will excuse, not condemn me. A conscience is a safeguard against the practice of sin. It is a constant reminder to do our duty, to do the things that we know to be right. Here is a thing that I think is wrong, my conscience reminds me not to do it, because my intelligence tells me that it is wrong, and I just walk over my conscience and go ahead and do the thing, thinking that it is wrong when I do it, then I have violated my conscience. I have broken down my resistance against sin. The next time it will be easier for me to go right ahead and do the thing that I know is wrong; and therefore, I have sinned because I have commenced breaking down my resistance against sin, and destroying the protection against sin that God has given me. That is the reason why I cannot afford to violate my conscience.

The matter is presented in two different respects in the teaching of New Testament Scriptures, James said, “If a man know to do good, and does it not, to him it is sin.” Why? His conscience condemns him, because he has not done the thing that he understands to be his duty. It is a sin to violate your conscience. If he goes contrary to his conscience it is sin to do it. Paul said, “Whatever is not of faith is sin.” If I do the thing that I know is wrong, that is questionable in my own mind, and I cannot be fully persuaded and convinced that it is right, then I am offending my conscience. I am trampling it under my feet, and there is a danger that if I continue to do so it will become hardened. Paul talks about people whose consciences were seared as with a hot iron, and afterward the conscience and its voice will not be heard at all. A lot of people say, “Preacher that means that if a thing over here, for instance like drinking, if I think that it is all right to drink, then that makes it right.” That is the doctrine Catholicism teaches about it. That is exactly what they teach, that the individual’s conscience is to determine. Paul said, “Concerning the eating of meats” that you must not violate your conscience. In eating meat there isn’t any principle involved. In the eating of meat the thing is neither right nor wrong. It is wholly a matter of indifference. But you could not say that about drunkenness, or drinking. You could not say that it is wholly a matter of indifference with reference to gambling. You could not say that it is wholly a matter of indifference with reference to the dance. There are other principles involved in these practices. Therefore, it does not make it right just so you think it is right. Thinking a thing is right does not make it right anytime. If a thing is wrong it is wrong in spite of what you think about it. Because it violates the principles of the righteousness of God. If it is a matter of indifference, neither right nor wrong, Paul says, if you can not eat it with a good conscience, you sin when you eat it. So the principle applies to this realm, to matters of indifference, and when my conscience does not allow me to do it because there is a question in my mind about it. My conscience accuses me when I do it. I am violating my conscience.

I am weakening my resistance against sin, and that is what Paul taught in Romans 14:23. If a thing is questionable in your mind, it is wrong for you to do it, whether it is wrong for any other reason or not. That is just a pretty good thing to remember. It may not be wrong for
any other reason, perhaps not a single thing involved in it—that makes it wrong, but you think it is wrong, it is questionable in your mind, it is a violation of your conscience to do it. and that is what Paul taught with reference to the eating of meat and it applies to anything else. A man could not play a 'game of tiddledy winks if he did it in violation of his conscience without sinning before God, and it would be exactly the same principle. So what you think is wrong, what you in your own mind cannot do with the approval of your heart and intellect, that you must not do. You violate your conscience when you do. That is another principle that will help me decide what is right and wrong, and I need to understand Paul’s statement in Romans 14:23: “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” I must have a full assurance of my heart that it is acceptable and right before I can do it, no matter what it is. The approval of the conscience does not make anything right that is otherwise wrong. To violate your conscience Is to weaken your own resistance against sin, and that is the reason you cannot violate it. That is the reason it is wrong for you to violate it.

(Continued next month)

IT SOUNDS FAMILIAR

6674 Railroad Street
Church of Christ
Anywhere, U.S.A.

Dear Faithful Preaching Brethren:

Surely you will look into your heart and pocket-book to answer the crying need of this place. The church in Anywhere was founded in 1918 by six loyal members. Through many trials and tribulations, splits and fusses, our membership now stands at a whopping 15.

The denominations have better buildings than we do, and folks are beginning to talk about us. That is why we ask you to rush to our assistance-now!

Anywhere is a hard but promising field. Cucumbers grow so big here they look like watermelons. In fact, some say that Anywhere will someday be the cucumber Mecca of America!

We have spotted a lot in downtown Anywhere which is centrally located, and all that stuff, which we can get for a mere $11,600. On this lot we plan to erect a $64,000 meeting house which will be a tribute to the cause, and the envy of the denominations.

Through extreme sacrifice, the members have in the past five years, raised $46,32 and three buttons. Nearby churches, fifteen in all, who know how worthy this field is, have together contributed $128. We felt that our cause was underway, and, taking courage, started our building program.

But, alas! with rising costs, little did we know what we would run into. It took all our ready cash to buy the most essential item—a mimeograph machine! We then borrowed money for envelopes, stationery, postage, and ink. If one of the members had not shrewdly suggested that we send these 17,432 letters third-class, I doubt that we could have sent them at all!

So you can see we are in quite a pickle. People are now asking, “When are you going to build?” Oh, the cause is suffering! suffering!! SUFFERING!!

The owner of the lot has agreed to hold it for us indefinitely, unless he can find another buyer, And Brother Wackey, a local member of vision, has suggested this marvelous plan:—

We are asking each minister to contact all members who have $3.00! Ask those members to each buy a little pig, and put him up in a picket fence in the back yard. (Any kind of picket fence will do) Just feed that pig the ordinary slop left over from the wife’s cooking. Why, in no time at all that pig will bring—well, we don’t know just what; but, believe you me, pork is high these days!

When you have collected some $65 from each one, just pocket the $5 and send us the $60. You deserve this generous consideration for your efforts.

It is with extreme reluctance that we make this appeal at all. But we do promise you this: all receipts will be promptly and cheerfully acknowledged, unless we get too busy with other things.

Just mail all contributions to the treasurer of the church in Pigeon-Roost, as we do not have a member here competent to handle that much money.

Very sincerely yours,

Joe Poakes

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

By Roy E. Cogdill

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SOME OLD DOCTRINES RESTATED AND EXAMINED

R. L. WHITESIDE

The Holy Spirit in Conversion

In the latter part of my previous article, I made some observations on the plain statement of the passages that speak of the word of God as seed. The purpose of seed is well known. If you want to produce plants in the spiritual kingdom, you must plant the seed, which is the word of God. Anyone who has sense enough to raise vegetables could understand that the word of God, the seed, is necessary to produce Christians, if he were not blinded by foggy theology. But here is one thing that should make people think: If the theory is true that life is generated in the sinner before he can understand or accept the word, then the word of God is not seed! This thought has not had the attention its importance deserves. If “seed” is incapable of producing life, it is not seed.

Now read carefully Matt. 11:28-30: “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” To whom is this invitation extended? Our hereditary depravity advocates tell us that a sinner cannot do anything till he is regenerated, or made alive, by a direct work of the Holy Spirit; and they tell us that when that occurs all burdens of heart are rolled away, and happiness reigns. If that is true, then Jesus is not inviting them—his invitation is to those who labor and are heavy laden, and who desire rest. Read the verses again. Jesus is not inviting those who have been made shouting happy over being regenerated and thereby having their burdens of sins rolled away. And certainly Jesus would not be “inviting people to come, who are so bound by hereditary depravity that they cannot come.” But these advocates are wrong, as wrong as wrong can be, Jesus is inviting those who labor against the adverse forces of the world and who are burdened with sin and doubt; and he places motives before them to induce them to come—rest, sweet rest, and association with Jesus. If the promises of the gospel and the dread of punishment do not move sinners, nothing will.

To show the helplessness of the sinner John 6:44 is quoted wrongly applied: “No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” It is assumed without any sort of proof that God draws the sinner by a direct operation of the Spirit. It is hard to believe that such argument is made ignorantly, for in the next verse Jesus says: “It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God. Everyone that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me.” There is therefore a drawing and a coming. What is learned through being taught draws people, and they come. “I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.” (Hos. 11:4). “Yes, I have loved thee, with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee,” (Jer. 31:3). God does not draw people to him by physical power. He draws with the power of the gospel, and that is done through teaching. “But no one will be drawn by this teaching, unless he believes; ‘for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.” (Heb. 11:6). The sinner must be taught, must be: lieve and then come; in this way God draws,

“The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him; for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!” (Rom. 10:8-15).

To understand this Scripture we need first to notice some of the terms used by Paul. “The word” and “the word of faith, which we preach” of verse 8 are the “Glad tidings of good things” of verse 15. In the New Testament a preacher was ‘God’s ambassador, and the herald or proclaimer of the divine word.”-Thayer. Paul says he was made a preacher and an apostle. (I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11). God qualified and sent certain men, called apostles, to proclaim the gospel-to reveal it. No one could reveal the gospel unless God sent him. And if these men had never proclaimed the gospel, no one could have heard it, and therefore no one could have believed. But as it was written for us, we can read and believe. “Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of his disciples,
which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name.” (John 20:30-31) Life or salvation, depends on hearing, and hearing depends on the original proclamation of the gospel. No hint is here given that some direct power is necessary to enable anyone to believe: but it is plainly taught that the original proclamation of the gospel is the only thing that is necessary to enable anyone to believe. “For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.” (I Cor. 1:21). Or, through the foolishness of the thing preached. To the Greek philosophers the gospel was foolishness, but it was God’s means of saving all who would believe it. Not a hint is here given that any other power was necessary, or that any other means would be used.

When I was teen-age I frequently witnessed rousing mourner-bench exercises in revivals of a church which then thought that such exercises were the supreme method of converting sinners. When they succeeded in getting several mourners to come to the mourner-bench, they sang to them, and talked to them, and shouted over them. One man of years and of more than average intelligence, seemed to be the main one to pray. One of his petitions in a long prayer was, “O God, try some untried means on these hard-hearted sinners.” He wanted God to experiment on them to see if he could find something that would work. That sort of prayer was made when a group of mourners could not be excited into raising a shout. It reminds me of the rich man’s prayer in Hades before going into this place of torment. He wanted Abraham to try something on his brethren that had never been tried before; but Abraham said, “They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.” But the rich man knew they would not pay any attention to Moses and the prophets; “but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent.” But Abraham knew it was useless to try some untried means on them; so he said, “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.” (Luke 16:31). In view of what we hear today, is it not singular that neither the rich man nor Lazarus thought of the direct operation of the Spirit-no untried means was used on these five brethren, though the rich man asked to have it done.

The Jewish Sanhedrin, or council, opposed the gospel and antagonized and persecuted God’s preachers. For this reason Stephen said to the council, “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye.” Surely no one thinks these men were able to resist a direct impact of the almighty power of God! But they could, and did, resist, or oppose, the preaching the Holy Spirit did through chosen men. The connection and circumstances show clearly that this was the way of explaining how they resisted the Holy Spirit. Stephen, by way of explaining how they resisted the Holy Spirit said, “Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them that showed before of the coming of the righteous one: of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers; ye who received the law as it was ordained by angels, and kept it not.” (Acts 7:51-53). To illustrate further, read Nehemiah 9:20, 30: “Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them.” This instructing had been done through Moses and the prophets. “Yet many years didst Thou bear with them, and testifiedst against them through thy prophets: yet would they not give ear.” In this way they resisted the Holy Spirit. To attempt to do so would be an uneven wrestling match. But to resist any person does not necessarily mean a personal impact, or wrestling match. Paul resisted Peter; that is, he opposed what Peter was doing. (Gal. 2:11-14), James said, “Resist the devil.” (Jas. 4:7). Jesus resisted the devil with words; and the Jewish council had been resisting the Holy Spirit with words up to the time Stephen said, “Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit.” Because they could not answer Stephen’s arguments, they had decided to kill him. The Spirit had been striving “with them, but they had resisted him.

The people before the flood became very wicked—“all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.” Noah preached to them, but apparently made no impression. It was by his preaching that God’s Spirit was striving with them; and so God said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever.” Yet God gave them one-hundred and twenty more years of probation. But they grew worse; “and Jehovah saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” They had reached the limit of wickedness, even though God’s Spirit was striving with them through Noah’s preaching. Surely no one is simple enough to think God’s Spirit made a direct assault on them, but they were too powerful to be subdued!

There are recorded cases of direct supernatural influence, impact, or power on people, and even on animals; but it does not appear that any change in nature or character resulted from such influence or power. Hut these matters will be given some attention in our next article.
WHY I AM NOT A MEMBER OF TANDA LODGE

WALLACE W. THOMPSON

To begin with, I do not know whether the "lodge" would have me or not. To say the least, the church has a good advantage here, offers membership to "whosoever will." But if they would receive me as a member, I would not be such for several reasons. Surely nobody cares to do away with free speech, unless they have a "tyrannical disposition. The word "lodge" is mis-leading. The words "resort" and "club" and "incorporation" describe the organization better. This "club" is located at Arroyo Drive & Lakeview Drive near Big Bear Lake, California. It has a board of directors eighteen strong, a President, two Vice Presidents and a Treasurer. Of course by now more officers may have been added to the roster. So far as I know, none can belong unless he is a member of the church. This makes the "club" a peculiar one, distinctive. In fact that makes it a "church club." It is a project to provide entertainment, amusement, fun-fests, relaxation for the foot-sore and back-ruined, and at the same time teach the Bible. It still costs to spend time in the "camp", therefore there is no financial advantage for members of the church.

REASON (1) It is a fraternal order or society involving brethren in the joint enterprise. Thus rules and regulation of admittance and membership become necessary. As such, it is an association of persons to promote a common object and good-fellowship. One could as well indorse the "Wed Cross", "Masonic Lodge" "Odd Fellows" or any other like organization. It puts the church in the "resort" business, and will no doubt be forced to claim a "no profit" institution. How much different is it than a "Country Club" in plan and organization? None in the least. The men are higher class, yes; stand for better principles, but in organization and plan all are alike.

REASON (2) It would take from the church some of my time and financial support for the furtherance of the gospel. Any organization the size of this one and the price of it ($65,000.) requires time and financial support. To me that is a great sum of money for recreation and relaxation. To some $66,066 may not be many dollars, but I'm sure it would go a long way in spreading the truth in a foreign land, or at home for that matter.

REASON (6) No New Testament church ever set an example of giving to such an institution of worldly delight. It seems to all the faithful this reason is enough to discard the whole thing. Thus, the institution cannot be a Bible one for there is no Bible example. Several Christians saw the ancient arenas, but were fed to beasts as the sacrifice of their faith, to the shrieking and shrilling crowd a pleasing sight! What people do in the name of religion its indeed appalling.

REASON (4) The New Testament church is definitely committed to the building of stronger souls for eternal habitation. Therefore it ought not to enter into the "building of better bodies". Not one command does Jesus give the church to provide for the recreational needs of the members. The home provides for this, so does the school, so does the government. Millions are spent by all the taxpayers yearly to provide such as we have access to today. Cities spend fortunes in providing parks for the playful people. Rarely are charges made to go there and enjoy the day in relaxation. Let us leave this responsibility where it has ever been, and not burden the church therewith.

REASON (5) To (belong, in my estimation, lowers the standards of the church of the Lord, and is a reproach to the authority of Christ. This calls for criticism from the world and renders ineffective our statement that, "We have no human societies or organizations." The Big Bear brethren will have a hard time making a member of the "YMCA" understand that Tanda Lodge is not the "YMCA" of the church of Christ! This is a just and honest comparison. There is not a thing claimed for Tanda Lodge that is not claimed by the "YMCA" or "YWCA". It would be interesting to know if the Tanda Lodge lovers are opposed to the organizations of the Christian Church. Their attitude on them might reveal their purposes and belief, if only we could get them to say what they believe in this matter. How they could condemn them, I do not know!

REASON (7) Brethren are disagreed upon the question of owning and supporting a pleasure resort, therefore, such ought not to be supported that will drive the wedge of division between
brethren when such is unnecessary. If the Bible taught it, then it would be a matter of faith. As the Bible does not teach it, to push it or shove it upon the brethren is wrong. It becomes a cause of stumbling and offense.

REASON (8) Politics and powers enter into an organization of this kind. A clamoring and cry, a peal and plea will be made for the chief seats. Such instigates jealousy, envy and hatred, causes a rift even in a "brotherhood" of union workers or club members.

REASON (9) Not all popular men in the church are sound in faith, thus, overnight, the whole affair might fall into the hands of ungodly men that do not love the truth and have less love for the preachers of righteousness. Some are modernistic in faith, some are denominational in belief, 'others are weak, and a few have not enough faith to say they have any! An organization of this sort can do irreparable harm,

REASON (10) Through this order the church in "this section can be controlled to some extent. How? There are elders of the church on as directors. There are preachers. Oppose the lodge and they oppose you. This has already occurred. The leaders of the movement will continue to oppose any preacher that opposes it. Therefore, I cannot belong to it.

REASON (11) Young people will be led away from the simplicity of the gospel on the subject of church organization. They will grow up in the environment of the Lodge, believing that every church has a right to its own "Country Club" and "Pleasure Resort." The next generation will be tempted to go beyond their fathers, and no telling what kind of organization they will secure and set in operation by the side of this one.

REASON (12) And this is a Bible reason, "Bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness with contentment is great gain."

REASON (1'3) Belonging to it would violate Col. 3:1-2 with part of my affections set on "earthly" things.

REASON (14) Such a breach in the walls of Zion opens the floodgates for other organizations and institutions,

IN Off NCLUSION

A few Bible examples might call our minds away from such and cause them to abide on heavenly things. It is hoped that every member of this lodge will consider these things. I am not writing this to be disagreeable, but because I believe I am right in the matter. Recall Exodus 32, and the attitude of the people when Moses was receiving the Law? A short time previous they had seen demonstrated the mighty, miraculous power of Jehovah. But shortly they forgot all this. They demanded an idol, a golden calf to 'worship. Aaron consented. In the name of religion they violated the first three commandments, laid fear aside and took their choosing. The record states, "And the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." Solomon gave the Lord's wisdom, hear it: "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man" (Prov. 21:17). The church then that fosters sport, pleasure, is a "poor" church. Babylon was a walled fortress, an empire of mighty bulwarks. But she fell while the old king was toasting 1,000 lords and using the vessels of the temple in a wine-feast. It was in this night of mirth that God wrote the doom of this great kingdom. What was the epithet? "Weighed in the balances and found wanting!" The younger son of Luke 15 was headstrong and impulsive. Calling for his inheritance, he wasted it in riotous living. He left home, friendship, security and love. He became associated with evil companions, he sought the far-away places, the retreats, spending all, not foreseeing the future. Had he stayed where he was, the story would be one of prosperity to poverty, from home to hell. But the young man came to himself and went to his father. How often has this been re-enacted in the lives of boys and girls of today! There was the Corinthian church, lost to pleasure and lust. They had their philosophers, wisdom seekers and men pleasers, their divisions, court trials with brethren, incest between two of its members, the members were carnal, they were having loud feastings when they should have been eating the Lord's Supper With sobriety and understanding. A church with as much fun-making and merry-making as this one had in it has little time to fulfill the commission of the Lord. It is high time for all faithful and God-loving men to stand together, to cry out against these modern evils that threaten to engulf the church with societies and make it as common as any denomination on earth that stands for nothing. Our whole duty is to "Fear God and keep his commandments." It is a sad sight when professor lovers of truth use cunning craftiness to deceive and delude God's elect with moves that appeal to the lusts of the flesh. And it is sorry indeed when 'we are so gullible to accept such in the name of religion, labeled, "For our young people." Let us cast these things overboard, lest they shipwreck our faith and overthrow the faith of others. May the church with us all, be enough!

The New Testament was divided into verses by Robert Steven in 1661.
W. L. TOTTY CHANGES HIS POSITION ON THE CHURCH SUPPORTING THE COLLEGE

CHARLES M. CAMPBELL

During the current controversy regarding the church being imposed upon by the college for financial support, W. L. Totty who preaches for the Garfield Heights church in Indianapolis, Indiana, has constantly charged some of us who have opposed this modern heresy, with changing our ‘attitude toward the anti-college brethren and the system commonly referred to as Sommerism. However, the truth is, as the facts will positively prove, no man ever more completely reversed himself on any proposition than he has on the question of the church supporting the college. For example, while Brother Totty has been writing to the aged Brother W. W. Otley and defiantly challenging him to deny in public debate that, “The New Testament law of expediency permits a church of ‘Christ to contribute to a Bible College and orphans home.” I have had in my possession his statement over his signature which contradicts specifically and emphatically the idea that the church can support a “Bible College.” Under date of May 22, 1947, Brother Totty wrote:

“IT have held three of the only four debates on the college question that I know of in the North since Daniel Sommer returned from his trip to the South and West. Wallace said debates. That will necessarily include me, and I know well that I never tried to ‘justify’ churches supporting the colleges. I “justified” individuals supporting the colleges, and will continue to do so.”

If Brother Totty had abided by the express conviction as thus stated, he would have continued to stand with those of us who are still standing where we have always stood with regard to the opposition to the schools as such. This he has not done, but has attempted to defend his new position, first by denying that he had committed himself to such a position as that stated above, and finally, by proposing an explanation of the obvious and undeniable contradiction involved. However, the explanation does not explain, and the denial was disposed of in correspondence. By the citation of the above quotation and which produced the “explanation”, Under date of April 6, 1948, Brother Totty wrote:

“Your reference to my change since last May is a gross error. You said you quoted that from memory, and your memory must have slipped a cog. With all such respect as I have for you, and that is a lot, I will have to say that statement in print before I can believe that I made it; and then if I see it with my name to it, I will be compelled to say I made a mistake, for I have not changed my position; and I have abundant proof here in this congregation that I taught the same thing five years ago as I am teaching now.”

Well, Brother Totty has seen “that statement in print” and with the convincing evidence that it has his “name to it,” and so, he will just have to admit that he “made a mistake”. But to confess that he has changed his position in regard to the church supporting the college would be more impressive and effective. Nevertheless, it is altogether fitting and proper that the “explanation” be submitted for the consideration of all concerned. Under date of June 23, 1948, Brother Totty wrote:

“I shall not attempt to answer your letter only to say that the quotation from my letter of May 22, 1947, is correct; but your understanding of it is wrong. I gave you that quotation merely to show you that Foy Wallace had misrepresented “me in those debates. We were debating the right for a college to exist as a Bible College, and not the support of a Bible ‘College. I did not contend for churches supporting Bible colleges, but I did not believe it was wrong for them to do it. You misunderstood the quotation.”

I have been understanding Brother Totty in both conversation and correspondence for more than twenty years, and therefore, it is reasonable to conclude, and I believe, that I understood his statement of May 92, 1947, I understood him to say:

“I know well that I never tried to ‘justify’ churches supporting the colleges, I ‘justified’ individuals supporting the colleges, and will continue to do so.”

Now, no matter what the proposition for debate was, neither what Brother Totty was affirming nor denying, the fact remains that he “never tried to ‘justify’ churches supporting the colleges. He ‘justified’ individuals supporting the colleges, and will continue to do so.”

If, therefore, Brother Totty had remained where he proposed to originally stand concerning the church and the “Bible college,” no issue could possibly exist between him and those of us who have been charged by him both privately and publicly with changing, and upatutating to the Sommerites. And, I think we know who has committed the caprice with which we are charged and why. There is a reciprocity in championing this new heresy, the schools can benefit from it financially, and Brother Totty can realize the ambition of a decade; to be recognized as the defender of the faith against hobbyism. Notwithstanding, he has allowed himself to be exploited to the point of becoming
a dogmatist as confirmed in his defence of an indefensible position as the anti-college element ever dared to be in theirs. A few years ago Brother N. B. Hardeman told Brother Totty: “Why, I could preach for the Sommerites, Brother Will.” And, Brother Totty was considerably chagrined over it. Now, they are in perfect accord in believing that “the New Testament law of expediency permits a church of Christ to contribute to a Bible college,” and then he no longer has to wonder “Where is that done?” “If he means church money.” Surely it is “church money” when it is contributed by the church and expended through the church, and the records are kept on the church books.

Then recently to further augment and expidite the efforts of his colleagues in the plan to insinuate the college into the treasury of the churches, Brother Totty published a booklet, Miscellaneous Discussions of the Bible College, and it further reveals his change. It is no longer a fight against the anti-college group, but a deliberate effort to reflect upon those who have opposed and are opposing the very error which Brother Totty formerly proposed to fight against, namely, imposing the college upon the church, and the absurd idea that individuals cannot support a school in which the Bible is taught.

As to the title of the booklet, I think it rather appropriate, for one of the definitions of Miscellaneous is: “consisting of several kinds mixed together,” and in the light of its contents, the booklet most assuredly will qualify on these terms. There is one side, however, which the author studiously avoided, and that was the side of the opposition to the nefarious scheme of these propagandists. In the introduction the author declares “Our purpose in publishing this booklet is that it may clarify the issue in the minds of many good brethren.”

Behold, what a reflection upon the intelligence of “the minds of many good brethren”? All of the articles in the booklet and the unanswerable replies made to them were printed in the Bible Banner, and with the exception of a few letters written by Brother Totty to Brother Roy Cogdill, the contents of the booklet without the answers, were printed in the Advocate. The “many good brethren” had access to these periodicals. Why, then, should Brother Totty, or the author of the booklet, whoever he was, attempt to “clarify the issue in the minds of many good brethren”? And, while asking questions, let me inquire just how the printing of one side of an issue could possibly “clarify the issue in the minds of many good brethren”? The booklet reminds me of the fiasco published by Frank Norris as the “Norris-Wallace Debate,” and I am persuaded that it was published and propagated with the identical objective. For example, the author of the booklet says:

“I am sure that there was nothing in my letter that would exceed the bitterness that he had manifested in some articles; therefore, we would be compelled to eliminate that point as the reason for Brother Wallace’s not answering my letter. Could it have been that I had known for several years that Brother Wallace was exceeding friendly with the Sommerites of Indianapolis? Some of his best friends had been alarmed over the way
he had sympathized with the Sommerites in their work in the North. I would rather think that perhaps that was the reason for Brother Wallace’s silence concerning the questions that I had asked him. Predictions had been made for several months before he took up the college fight that he would eventually go to the Sommerites. Maybe these predictions were somewhat far-fetched, but at least he did take up the old banner of Sommerism and fight their battles through the Banner.”

Now the one difficulty with the above excerpt is; it does not correctly represent Sommerism and it maliciously misrepresents Brother Wallace. “The following facts will make manifest the inexactness of the statement

“Proposition—The Human Organization of a Bible College, such as David Lipscomb, Abilene Christian College, Freed-Hardeman College, established by Professed Christians to teach the Bible along with Secular branches,—is in harmony with the New Testament. Affirms D. A. Sommers Denies.”

Thus the “old banner of Sommerism,” Spiritual Call, presents its position. Now hear Brother Wallace:

‘Borne who have not made proper discrimination have wrought confusion by associating the ‘Bible college’ with the “work of the church. Others have, therefore, opposed it on the ground that it is a ‘church school,’ while others think it wrong and sinful to teach the Bible in the school. Such a conclusion should drive the ‘Bible from our homes also and force the conclusion that it can be taught only in the meetinghouse on Sunday.” (Bible Banner, January 1948, Gospel Advocate 1931)

As to Brother Wallace being “exceedingly friendly with the Sommerites in their work in the North,” and the idea that he would eventually go to the Sommerites it is “somewhat far-fetched” indeed, but Brother Totty is the very one who originated the “far-fetched” prophecy. So, he answers himself on that point, providing of course, that he is the author of the booklet, And, a further answer is found in the fact that those who have (allied themselves with Brother Totty in his campaign to impose the blood bought church of the living God against those who sow discord among brethren and impose a system of human inventions irrespective of divine legislation, and never did I suspicion that he entertained the slightest intention of allying himself with those who have compromised the cause for which we had contended and have deliberately and diligently sought to subject the church to the mercy of human institutionalism. Moreover for the duration of the recent controversy over the college being imposed upon the church, I have tried earnestly to dissuade him from the course to which he has now committed himself, and while I hold no personal bitterness toward him, and shall continue to hope for his return to the position which we formerly occupied, I cannot be true to my conscience and not point out the inconsistency of his present course for the good of the Cause of Christ and the good of his soul.
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