

Integrity

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Tragedy in Brooklyn

We live in an age hardened to news of unspeakable cruelties, to crimes of ignorance and passion, to death and destruction wrought in the name of country or race or religion. But once in a while a senseless tragedy will seize our attention and call our conscience to account. The sudden and violent death of Philip Roseberry provides just such an occasion.

Philip Roseberry, a minister of the Churches of Christ and director of the Shiloh program in the East New York section of Brooklyn, was shot and killed Monday night, June 30, 1975. He had just escorted some young Shiloh volunteers to the building where they lived. As the young ladies were climbing the stairs to their apartment, they heard two shots in the street. They returned to find Mr. Roseberry lying dead in the doorway. Police have been unable to identify his assailant or establish a motive for the murder. His wallet and the small amount of money he carried were untouched.

Mr. Roseberry and his wife, Donna, had worked in East New York, Brooklyn, for five years, loving, teaching, baptizing, nurturing, and caring for the needs of young people and their families. As news of Mr. Roseberry's death spread through the neighborhood, hundreds of people, young and old, gathered in the street in front of the apartment building where they had lived, seeking to comfort his widow and to express their outrage and disbelief at the tragedy. Community leaders in East New York organized a memorial service and a drive to collect funds to assist Donna Roseberry.

Little more than a year ago, Mr. Roseberry was badly beaten by an invading youth gang from out of the neighborhood. His face had required major surgery, but Mr. and Mrs. Roseberry had elected to continue their work, and the community stood behind them. Mr. Roseberry refused to press charges against his attackers. It is not known at this time if this previous incident is in any way related to his death.

Both Philip and Donna Roseberry were graduated from David Lipscomb College, Mr.

Roseberry with a degree in Bible. Their lives and their commitment to Jesus Christ are a credit to the institution which educated them.

Donna Roseberry is expecting a child in the fall. Because they had worked in Brooklyn on meagre "subsistence" support since they graduated from college, the Roseberrys had accumulated no money of their own. There were two small life insurance policies for Mr. Roseberry, one purchased by his parents and the other by the Shiloh program. These policies will help Mrs. Roseberry, but the contributions of fellow Christians could further assist in easing the many burdens she will have to bear in the coming months and years.

A "Philip Roseberry Family Assistance Fund" has been organized to accept voluntary contributions. Checks written to "Camp Shiloh, Inc." and earmarked for this fund will be tax-deductible. According to Bryan A. Hale, executive director of Shiloh, all funds collected will be disbursed directly to Donna Roseberry. Contributions to the fund may be sent to P.O. Box 627, Mendham, New Jersey 07945.

Funeral services for Mr. Roseberry were conducted Thursday, July 3, in his hometown of East Liverpool, Ohio. Additional memorial services have been scheduled in Brooklyn, New York, Mendham, New Jersey, and Nashville, Tennessee.

A personal note: I have known the Roseberrys well, and I know well the community in which they worked. Philip Roseberry is at rest with the Lord whom he served with commitment, compassion, and courage. When his child is born, he or she will be heir to a remarkable legacy. And so are we all—for while today there may be few "who bear the testimony (*marturia*) of Jesus" (Rev. 19:10), Phil Roseberry is such an one. His body may be dead, but his spirit and his memory live on to challenge and inspire the rest of us. May we each aspire to become what Philip Roseberry was: in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "a repairer of the breach, a restorer of streets to dwell in."

—DON HAYMES

Foiled by Fear

It was my privilege last month to appear on a panel with Perry Gresham, president emeritus of Bethany College. Dr. Gresham, whose credentials qualify him to make such judgments, believes that our generation, given its fascination with nostalgia, is especially ripe for being led back to the basic ideas with which the Restoration Movement began. Unfortunately many of us lack the capital for buying up the opportunities, since we are too busy disputing among ourselves to give our attention to others. Hence the prelude to any general unity movement must be an attempt to maintain unity among ourselves. We may rejoice that there are so many who recognize this need and who are successfully working to achieve positive results. But why are there so many holdouts?

It is ironic that our separations are invariably based on inferences from Scripture, which our forefathers disallowed. Thomas Campbell asserted that "inferences and deductions from Scripture premises . . . are not formally binding upon the consciences of Christians farther than they perceive the connection, and evidently see that they are so . . . no such deductions can be made terms of communion . . . it is evident that no such deductions or inferential truths ought to have any place in the Church's confession." Why have we wandered so far from this original outlook, commonly refusing to have anything at all to do with our brothers who have not accepted our inferences? My answer—based partly on experience, partly on observation—is that we are afraid.

This is no new problem. Jesus encountered it in the Pharisees, who saw him as a threat to their vigorous fight to keep the Jews from being assimilated by the Gentiles. They were not only defending religion, but also culture. And so are we. Most of us did not discover our peculiar positions, we inherited them—which is precisely why they are indispensable and why we are jealous for deductions which we very likely would never have made without help from some source other than the Bible.

One of the hardest things in the world to accept is an abrupt and significant change in culture. This is why missionaries often seek to Americanize as well as evangelize. It compels us to prolong our racial conflicts. And I believe it is a significant factor in the way we interpret the Bible's definition of woman's role in church and society. We are dreadfully afraid of anything that threatens our cultural peculiarities.

Some of our people are horrified by the very suggestion that they should pursue the possibility of fellowship with their brethren in the Restoration Movement. But what are we afraid of? Could our touting of doctrinal purity actually be a camouflage for lack of confidence either in our position or in ourselves? When we begin to communicate seriously with "digressives," we will learn that they are individuals, who, along with us, are objects of God's love. When we get to know them better, we will learn to love them, and perfect love casts out fear. Until we overcome our fear it is futile to ask "Is the Restoration Principle Valid?" for we deny its validity by our own behavior.

—HGL

The Principle Reconsidered

THOMAS LANE

Cincinnati, Ohio

The Restoration Movement has for a major emphasis the uniting of all God's people in a tangible way. The fathers of the Movement found the church of God divided in their time, in large part because human opinions about matters not only of religion but of politics were made tests of fellowship. The founding fathers of our tradition, seeing human opinion to be the cause of division, derived a principle or plea which they thought would solve the problem of division. That plea was for all Christians to take the Bible alone as their rule of faith, and to stand as one upon the Bible's teachings.

Through the past 175 years of Restoration history, that plea for unity has taken on a tone it did not have at first. Now we conceive of the proper Christian unity as being unanimity in the teachings and practices found peculiarly in the Christian Church and Church of Christ, the "restored" New Testament church. The plea for unity on the basis of the Bible is still uttered, but when we issue that call we really are issuing a call for all Christians to conform to the way we think and act.

Is this a proper understanding of the Restoration plea? What sort of unity would result if the Restoration plea were applied as rigorously as possible according to the dictates of common sense? An analysis of the Restoration plea itself, in the light of what we know about the rel-

ative ease or difficulty of proving any particular pet doctrine to be apostolic, shows that we should seek after unity somewhat differently from the way we do.

The historic Restoration plea is for the unity of all believers in Christ within the form of the apostolic church as its doctrines, ordinances and polity are revealed in the New Testament. Fidelity to the New Testament is the essence of Restoration theory. This grounding of faith and practice in the Bible is an excellent axiomatic position, and little to be questioned. The very nature of the Christian religion demands that we find our faith in an infallible and sufficient written scripture. For Christianity is God communicating His mind to men, reconciling men to His fellowship. Christianity is God revealing Himself to man so that man might know what is required of him. There is no more reasonable, efficient way for such revelation to be made than through a written Scripture. By recording His mind in a Book, God ensures that His truth will endure. Word of mouth or ritual and tradition are all subject to change as the whims and life styles of men change. But written language is a durable medium of transmission of thought.

Interestingly enough, the Restoration principle and that faith in the adequacy of Scripture, which underlies the principle, amount to little more than a novel restatement of the historic Reformation

principle of *sola Scriptura*. This principle has been shared by practically all conservative Protestants from the time of Luther right down to the present. *Sola Scriptura*, or Scripture only, has it that the Bible alone is the proper guide to Christian faith and practice. This dependence upon Scripture as the sole authentic textbook of faith, made tenable by confidence that the Bible is an inerrant expression of the mind of God, is the basic tenet of religion throughout the world, forming the basis upon which evangelicals recognize one another as joint heirs with Christ, despite the differences that separate their many denominations.

A System of Doctrines . . .

Taking the Bible as their sole guidebook to faith, and seeking to ferret out the pattern of the New Testament church, the Restoration fathers and their early heirs evolved a distinct system of doctrines conceived to be that indisputably established by the Bible. This system was the result of their honest and diligent investigation of many religious issues. This system, then, was in a very real way the natural end of the application of the Restoration principle. We later heirs of the principle have labored hard to perpetuate not only their plea, but this peculiar system of doctrines and practices.

The fact that the Restoration principle is for all practical purposes identical to the principle of *sola Scriptura* which is a universal tenet of evangelical faith, and the fact that the present posture of the Restoration churches in doctrines, polity and ordinances is but the result of former-day open inquiry crystallized into a traditional stance, when considered together yield some interesting conclusions.

In principle the Restoration plea differs in nothing from the broad modus

operandi of all conservative Protestants. Adherents of the Campbell heritage and adherents of the Luther-Calvin heritage are agreed in taking the Bible as their sole rule of faith and practice. Unity already exists at ground level. It expresses itself in the numerous points of doctrinal agreement among all Protestants:

The evidences of the Christian religion—the arguments that prove the divine person and mission of the common Savior—the reasons why he is to be accredited and received as the only Savior of the world—the necessity of faith in him—of repentance toward God—of a new heart and life—of supreme devotion to his will—the value of his death as a sin-offering—the necessity of his resurrection, and the certainty of his coming to judge and retribute the living and the dead according to their works.

This "common Christianity . . . against which no intelligent Protestant could object" is as much in evidence today as when Alexander Campbell articulated it in the *Millennial Harbinger* in 1837, p. 258.

The Distinguishing Factor . . .

So at the level of governing principle and even in many cardinal doctrines, all of the evangelical world, Reformation and Restoration, is united. What then is it which gives the Restoration Movement its identity, besides the unique language in which it expresses the common evangelical plea of *sola Scriptura*? The distinguishing factor is that peculiar system of doctrines and practices which have come to be associated with those churches sharing in the Restoration tradition. We are obviously different from the other churches in that our doctrinal system is at variance with theirs; and we uphold this difference as being really one of very governing principle because our system was the outcome of a fresh analysis of the Scriptures conducted in the context of a unique phrasing of *sola Scriptura*. Being

hoodwinked by the way the Restoration plea has been worded and hailed, into thinking we are in principle distinct from other evangelicals, we believe that our system of doctrines is the only system intentionally grounded in the written Scriptures. Therefore, not realizing that our uniqueness is in interpretation and not in principle, we view ourselves as the restored church of Christ, while all other Christians, operating on the same principle of fidelity to the Bible yet coming up with different interpretations, we denounce as denominationalists.

This plea for unity in the essential doctrines and practices set forth in the New Testament was originally and is yet being offered as the panacea for all division in the church, as though only those doctrines and points of emphasis which are the hallmarks of Restoration churches are so clearly revealed in the Scriptures that only an imbecile, a bigot, or a papist (many times those terms are used interchangeably) could fail to accept them. Fact is, it isn't all that easy to prove that our system of doctrines is really Scriptural. Many sincere, open-minded seekers after truth have in studying the Scriptures come to conclusions differing from those venerated by Restorationists. In the celebrated Campbell-Rice debate, Mr. Campbell asserted that the views he was defending were perfectly clear in the Scriptures. Mr. Rice countered by observing that if they were so obvious, there is no explanation for the fact that the overwhelming majority of Christians since the Reformation had failed to see them. Are we to condemn those who disagree with us for their honest inability to be convinced by our arguments? We usually do, especially those of us who having been raised in Restoration churches have never personally questioned our pet doctrines or had to grapple with the evidence upon which

enduring systems other than our own have been built. Those of us who have come from non-Restoration backgrounds should realize how clearly we once saw certain doctrines of our present affiliation to be false. Truly, those doctrines which we suppose to be abundantly clear in the Bible are not necessarily so.

Other "Restorationists" . . .

It is absurd, then, to speak of ourselves exclusively as the "New Testament church" and to scorn all other believers in Christ and the authority of the Bible as "denominationalists." All who sincerely seek to discover truth from the New Testament are obeying the Restoration plea of fidelity to that document, whether they think in traditional Restoration language or not. Acceptance of the Restoration plea, or of what is tantamount to it, *sola Scriptura*, does not invariably lead to acceptance of the Restoration system of dogmas. It is ridiculous to speak of only ourselves as the New Testament church. Interestingly enough, Baptists and Presbyterians typify themselves as the New Testament church. Since they strive to take their beliefs from the New Testament just as we do, they are, strictly speaking, New Testament Christians.

We find that throughout that section of the evangelical world which lies admittedly in the Luther-Calvin heritage, it is recognized that all who give assent to the principle of fidelity to Scripture alone are one even though they may differ in some points of doctrine and practice. Agreement on the authority of the Bible and the divinity and saviorhood of Christ are taken as a good enough basis for fellowship among Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans and others. Those denominations and autonomous congregations which refuse to engage in outright

ecumenicity do even so affirm that they are not the only Christians, and cooperate with members of other affiliations in mass evangelistic and other efforts which give a united Christian witness to the community. Sure, some members of these denominations do find the differences between themselves and other staunch supporters of the singular authority of the Bible to be too great to permit cooperation. But such persons are in the minority.

No Peculiarity . . .

On the other hand, the differences between the Restoration system and the doctrinal systems of other churches we have found to supply an excuse for our refusal to have congenial relations, let alone actual cooperation, with other denominations. We have not recognized the broad spectrum of things in which all adherents of the sufficiency of Scripture are already united, of particular significance being the very principle of *sola Scriptura*. The reason for this is of course the fact that through the years we have associated our system of doctrines with the very Restoration principle, which we have mistakenly thought to be our "peculiar" plea. We are blinded to the fact that the principle is not peculiar. Similarly, we are reticent to admit the difficulty of proving many of our most cherished traditional doctrinal standpoints to other Christians who are as equally convinced of the intelligibility, inerrancy and sufficiency of the Bible as we are.

It's time we faced facts. For too long we have envisioned a distinction between ourselves and other evangelicals which does not exist. We must come to understand that in principle the Restoration Movement has nothing that all other Protestants of a conservative bent do not have, barring a unique way of saying

things. All Protestants, of either the Reformation or the New Reformation strain, are united in what has been variously called *sola Scriptura* and the Restoration plea.

Realizing that we are not at very root level different from many others who grant allegiance to Christ, we can find it easy to relate to these others in the fashion in which they now relate to one another. We can understand that only our interpretation makes us distinct, and can affirm and find a powerful basis for fellowship in those teachings which we have in common with other evangelicals. We can realize that they are in fact our brethren, and our fellow seekers after the truth. Unfettered from the belief that they are on a totally different track from ourselves, we can admit that it is in fact difficult to interpret some of the things the Bible says, a fact we have experienced if not admitted all along. Consequently, we can cease to consider other Christians our spiritual inferiors because of their systems of belief and practice, and can find solidarity with them in a common and endless search for the full pattern of the apostolic church as its doctrines and sacraments and organization are reflected in the pages of the common Scripture. We can be less eager to perpetuate a system of beliefs and practices handed down from our past and accepted uncritically, and can become more eager to confirm these things for ourselves, and even deny them if reason would so lead us.

The Essential Plea . . .

Our experience would lead us to believe that if no one system of doctrines is venerated and forced upon all Christians, such honest inquiry will lead to considerable diversity of belief and practice. When we disassociate the principle of fidelity to the Scripture from the traditional Resto-

ration doctrines and make the principle supreme and the doctrines subject to honest investigation, we sacrifice that plea for unity which presently characterizes the Restoration Movement. That plea is for unity in the doctrines of the Restoration churches, which are taken to represent the full expression of the pattern of the apostolic church revealed in the Word. If that particular slant on unity must be discarded, so be it. But we actually come close to the original goal and plea of the Restoration Movement, before any particular doctrines became too closely identified with the Restoration plea. The earliest ideal of unity among the Campbells and others was the relegation to the dunghill of human constructions and the bringing to the awareness of all Protestants the fact of their actual oneness in Christ and the acceptance of the Scriptures. Essentially, then, the Restoration plea was for unity in the teachings of the New Testament. This requires diligent searching out of the deep things of the Word, beyond all allegiance to the authoritative teachings of men, including the teachings of our Restoration forebears! Creeds whether written or tacit usurp the authority of Scripture. When we disassociate our unwritten creed from our expressed principle, we will yet achieve a sort of unity. It will be a unity with diversity, but unity nonetheless. Those things which Christians will have in common will be great and fundamental, even as is the case now. Hence the diversity will not be so basic as to negate unity.

Someone objects, "But if unity is to be found through inquiry and not creed,

then all Protestants are already as united as they may ever be." This is absolutely correct. As the years go by perhaps a greater unanimity will appear, but the church of Christ on earth is essentially and constitutionally one even at this moment. That does not mean we must cease to be a movement for unity, or even that we must cease to regard ourselves as a movement and consider ourselves just another denomination (of course we often act like we are). By emphasizing principle as a basis for fellowship, and by arguing for the elimination of denominational hierarchies which perpetuate and make visible to all the diversity in the church which many in the world construe and which many Christians practice as disunity, we will remain a movement, and a unity movement at that.

Our Duty . . .

An analysis of the Restoration principle reveals that the Restoration Movement really has an overwhelming lot in common with other evangelicals. A reinterpretation of the historic emphasis of the Restoration Movement in view of the fact that the Restoration plea is not unique argues for changes in our manner of relating to other Christians. The church we see is already as agreed in doctrines as it might well ever be. It remains for us to make the church fully one by pointing out the unity of principle which even now pervades it, and by urging upon others and practicing ourselves the spirit of fellowship which will maximize the unity of the people of God. □

The New Song

JOHN SMITH

Wichita, Kansas

There I was, washing this tandem-axle, cab-over, Peterbilt rig, when out from under November and December's accumulation of Chicago salt, Indiana dirt, Oklahoma red mud, and number two diesel fuel mixed four to one with Kansas sand there appeared *The Newsome Truck Line*. It was startling how those words, painted in cursive white on a royal blue base, jumped out at me when the jet-like stream of hot water passed across the door of the truck.

The Newsome Truck Line . . . something about those words caught at my mind, and wouldn't leave. It seemed I ought to remember something or somebody, but I couldn't get hold of it. I thought I had it when I remembered Bobo Newsome—a now-forgotten pitcher for the Detroit Tigers, one of my father's favorites—but that wasn't it, just a name.

I tried to give it up and went on with my work. I was washing the trailer and simultaneously admiring the spring day, warm and full of life, when I became conscious of humming the melody of an old song called "The New Song." That was it! It made me so happy I could have danced, except my heavy rubber boots and rubber suit would have seriously impeded my exhibition, had I possessed the talent. So, with only a very disinterested and totally unappreciative Peterbilt for an audience, I broke into a completely unrestrained a cappella rendition of the song.

I even remembered all three verses, and I was absolutely ecstatic with the boisterous enthusiasm and exhilarating expectancy raised in me by the spirit of it. It did "thrill my soul."

It was in the last stanza that a very warm and precious thought came to me. The words are: "I know when I have older grown my voice will not be strong." I thought first of myself. "Lord," I thought, "don't let me outlive my voice; what would life be to me if I couldn't sing?" Then I thought about Mom. The last few years had been very hard for her. She had had a light stroke and partially paralyzed her vocal chords. What had once been a strong, vibrant alto voice had been silenced, and even the speaking voice had become gravelly and raspy. I had watched her often, especially while I was leading singing, trying so hard to sing, trying to clear her throat, struggling to produce the old sounds of praise; then slowly closing her book, and often her eyes, as if trying to remember and be content with listening, listening to then and now too. Mom had really loved to sing, and our home was often filled with it. Very precious memories of her at the piano playing and singing her favorite hymns remain.

My song ended—just like her life ended—very suddenly. The bright sunny day became chilly to me, and unfriendly, and I hurried my work so I could go home. Thinking of home—what a warm and wonderful sentiment that aroused in me, and I thought of the song again: "but if good seed for Jesus I have sown, with angels I belong." Heaven! Home! What a place; no pain, sickness, tears, sin; eternal light; and the New Song of the redeemed! *The New Song!* It came to me like a clap of bright thunder, like an uninhibited shout of pure joy: "Praise God! Mom's got her voice back! Praise God!" □

In every truth which we receive there lurks some danger which has to be accepted with it.

—J.S. Whale, *The Protestant Tradition*

REACTION

NOTES ON "WORTHY WORSHIP"

ALLEN HOLDEN, JR.

Fort Worth, Texas

I read with interest Mark Ide's "Worthy Worship" in the May, 1975, *Integrity*. While I am in basic agreement with many of his main points, I felt that there were a few things that I wanted to add to the subject.

He mentions in his introduction that, "as priests, we have certain duties that must be fulfilled, one of which is worship. Each of us is responsible for worship to God." While this sounds good on the surface, it grates against me, especially when he classifies worship as a "duty." While I realize that there are certain obligations that we have as Christians, which could properly be termed "duties," I have never been able to see worship in that light. To me, Christian worship is a spontaneous, heart-felt response to the unbelievable grace of God. As I ponder the unmerited concern God has expressed for me, and the lengths to which he has gone to rescue me from my sin, I can only fall on my face and cry out, "Praise your holy name!" Worship is not a duty, it is a joy! For too long I viewed worship as one of my obligations; if only I met with the saints every time there was a scheduled assembly, performed the proper rituals, and had the proper attitude, all would be well with my soul. The Lord's Supper became some kind of a mystical potion that, if taken weekly, had the power to guarantee my standing with God and absolve me of all my guilt. It is this attitude that I am now

reacting against. For too long, worship has only been a duty we had to perform with regularity and precision, whether we felt moved to do so or not; I now believe that more harm has been done by making people feel that they have to worship when their heart is not in it than could ever possibly come by occasionally not meeting with other Christians.

I also should emphasize that our concept of worship is much too narrow to encompass all that the word meant to the New Testament writers. First of all, worship is not confined to liturgy, or to things that only occur when we are with other Christians. Paul asks us to "present your bodies unto God as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Rom. 12:1). To Paul, worship includes what we do with our bodies in our everyday existence, and not just when we are in a church building. Hence, I am worshipping when I work as an engineer, help a neighbor move, clean the house or go shopping. To the Christian, there is no distinction between secular and spiritual; all that we do, we do to the glory of God.

I noticed that Mark defined worship as "our effort of proclaiming the worship of God, to communicate to our Lord the worth that he is to us." While I agree that this is one very important facet of worship, I believe that we have for too long ignored another vital aspect: Worship is

also an important way in which we relate to other children of God. Were there not this "horizontal" dimension, there would be no reason to gather together to praise God, for we can express to God our praise and adoration just as well, if not better, when we are alone. It is when we sing to each other, confess, share and minister that we are worshipping, and these things can only be done when we are with other disciples. Maybe if we spent more time with our eyes open in church, looking around us, we would notice how lonely and alienated we are, and how much we really need each other. What we need is not more sermons on the love of God, but some real demonstration of that love in the way that we relate to each other.

I can also empathize with those who find our assemblies boring, dull and unsatisfying. We sing the same songs, hear the same old sermons, and do things in the same manner; even our prayers are often so trite that I wonder if God isn't as bored with them as we are.

Nothing More to Restore? . . .

For us to make the claim, as H.A. (Buster) Dobbs does in *What Lack We Yet?* that "the restoration became an accomplished fact" and that "there was nothing more to restore" requires that we ignore how heavily influenced we have been by the frontier worship of the last century. Our songs, evangelistic sermons, clergy-laity organization, and emphasis on the intellectual instead of the emotional is all rooted deeply in that time period, and not in the first century, Brother Dobbs' claims notwithstanding. I am also afraid that I cannot agree with Mark's statement that "we have arrived at a fine, scriptural external form of worship . . ." Not only is it trite and sterile to many of our members, but I believe that our worship format omits many practices that are

mentioned repeatedly in the Bible, and are worthy of prayerful consideration. Some of these are the following:

THE AGAPE: A vital part of the assembly of the early church was the *agape*, or the love feast, a time when food was shared, and Christians came to know each other better by the breaking of bread. To people in the Bible period, sharing a meal with a person carried with it the ideas of acceptance, love, intimacy and union. As a celebration of our oneness and as a part of the Lord's Supper, the *agape* could be a valuable part of our meetings.

THE AMEN: There is evidence that the entire congregation, men and women, joined together in saying the Amen after prayers (1 Cor. 14:16). As a way of expressing agreement, commitment and unity, the Amen has much to commend itself. (See Deut. 27:15-26.)

THE HOUSE CHURCH: Our culture's emphasis on property and prestige has convinced us that we must have an expensive meeting house for our infrequent assemblies, despite the overwhelming evidence that the early churches owned no property and usually met in homes. As a place where we can be comfortable and "at home," and where we can relate honestly and intimately to our brothers and sisters, the house church is possibly unsurpassed.

SHARING: 1 Corinthians 14:26 describes the assembly in Corinth, where people came with specific things to share with the congregation, "a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation," the end result being that "all things be done for edification." The assembly was not pre-planned and structured, but was fluid enough to accommodate individual contributions from the members. If a person wants to confess, share some

good news, teach a song or ask for prayers, he should feel free to do so in the assembly. We share both our joys and our sorrows, our strengths and our needs.

OTHER ITEMS of worship which are mentioned in the Bible include antiphonal and responsorial singing and reading, the holy kiss, laying on hands, the dance, solo singing, lengthy scripture reading, fasting, footwashing, prophesy, tongues and the interpretation of tongues.

We are not only being arrogant but also ignorant to claim that our worship is a faithful reproduction of first century worship. Not only do we do many things that they did not do (the invitation song, meet in a building, etc.), but we omit, for various reasons, a host of things which they did in their meetings. Furthermore, I think we have a long way to go before we will have captured the joy, spontaneity, excitement and mutual ministry which was characteristic of many New Testament churches.

Is Restoration a Valid Goal? . . .

If restoration is our goal, clearly we have not come anywhere near completing our task. But there are many people who are now asking whether we really should try to restore the exact structure and format of the early churches. We mistakenly assume that all the churches were identical, whereas, in reality, they were quite different, depending on location, whether they were primarily Jewish or Gentile, how old the congregation was, and who some of the dominant personalities in the church were, as a close reading of Acts and Revelation will show. But is restoration even a valid goal? It is nowhere implied in the New Testament that it should be our lot to try to reproduce the first century church in the twentieth century. In addition, to attempt to do so ignores

the effects history and culture have on our forms and structures. We have opportunities for worship which early Christians didn't have, including movies, plays, lectureships and workshops. Shouldn't we make use of developments in technology to improve our service? Shouldn't we feel free to express our faith in forms that communicate to our culture, even if these forms are different than those used 1900 years ago? We recognize this in our hymnology, for we don't sing *any* songs that the early church sang, and we are constantly incorporating new songs that are being written today. To be frank, I see no reason why the church shouldn't feel free to incorporate the best features of the arts, technology and society into our service, for to refuse to do so would unnecessarily impoverish us, and hinder us from relating meaningfully with modern man.

All of this may convey the impression that I believe that all would be perfect if only we had the right structure, form and technique. There *was* a time when I was consumed by the vision of correcting the faults I see in the organization and liturgy of the modern church, but, while I still believe in constructive change, I no longer feel that the greatest need for church is a change in the externals. With Mark, I feel that the problem is largely an internal one, one of attitude and disposition. I believe that the church can be a vibrant, ministering, Spirit-directed force whether it uses the most modern techniques or not. Some of the coldest, unconcerned, self-centered churches are the ones that we classify as "open" and "progressive." While I have some very definite opinions on the way I'd like things done, I realize that there are weightier matters. All our programs and plans are worthless if we don't know God, and if that knowledge doesn't lead us to relate meaningfully with our brothers and sisters. □

LETTERS

The Wrong Question

Both Mr. Lane and Mr. Speer, in their April 1975 articles in *Integrity* say some things that really need to be shouted from the roof-tops. I agree in principle with the ideas in both articles.

However, as badly as we in the "Church of Christ" need to "re-hash" and restudy many of our positions, interpretations, traditions, etc., is it really necessary that we seriously review our normal response to the question "What must I do to be saved?"

There are many difficult doctrines in the New Testament that need our continual study, but are "who is a Christian?" and "how is one saved?" two of them?

Though we have much in common with every man who believes in Christ and has made some response to God's love, all such men are not Christians (by God's definition). We can still recognize the common ground without softening God's conditions for salvation.

Is "salvation must follow baptism" just a traditional belief of "Churches of Christ," or just our interpretation? Many beliefs are granted, but not this basic one.

Owensboro, Kentucky TOM B. LOVELESS

Some Questions About Ourselves

The news of Phil Roseberry's death is shocking and depressing. For not only does it reveal the world around us, but it also raises some questions about ourselves. As stewards of God's blessings, where are our priorities? Why is it that those ministers with the most comfortable situations and who rarely face any physical danger greater than a flying golfball receive more pay than one who is living and working in an area where most of us cannot and will not go?

Such ministers as those in the Shiloh program scour the country for support and then are only able to get enough to barely feed themselves, as we half-heartedly give them our change, while others grow fat and soft with abundance and comforts. Those who respond to the plea to help Phil's widow are to be commended, but why wait for disaster? Could we

not be more generous to those like Phil who desire to preach Jesus to those inner city folks who are desperate for His love?

We sit around and bemoan the evil of this generation and the corruption of the ghetto and yet refuse to share abundantly with those who volunteer to go in and give themselves to try to bring Christ to the chaos. Could we not match their physical and emotional sacrifice with a financial one of our own instead of adding it to their already heavy load?

Is most of the "Lord's money" used to buy more comforts (buildings, carpets, drapes, etc.) for the lackadaisical while the laborer in the "white" field is left with the crumbs?

Grand Blanc, Michigan LILLIAN LEDBETTER

More on the ERA

For one who has spent nearly a lifetime in the classroom under the pardonable impression that he was a reasonably good teacher, it is somewhat disconcerting to find that this was not necessarily the case. Had I been a better teacher, Harold Key would not have lectured his old professor in public print on "arrogance" and "an attitude of infallibility" (I wonder at his language if devoid of his self-proclaimed restraint) on the ERA instead of taking the Key route of moderation on the "equal protection" clause.

Apparently I was not successful in teaching that the authors of the Fourteenth Amendment did not intend for this clause to incorporate women's rights, and that in their elaboration of the clause via the Fifteenth Amendment, they lightly rejected the proposal to add "sex" to the list of stipulations. Also, I must have failed to impress the fact that the Constitution is not necessarily what one may *think* it is, but what the Supreme Court *says* it is. Regrettably at times, no doubt, the Court has been guided more by *stare decisis* than Mr. Key's hermeneutical approach. If logically the "equal protection" clause should have erased all of the discriminatory laws barring women from the political process, it in fact required the Nineteenth Amendment. Similarly, the ERA is re-

quired to nullify the untouched discriminations imbedded in the statutes and Common Law of many of the states.

Tennessee cases may be cited. A young husband died intestate. The bereaved wife instantly lost access to the bank account. The estate had to be probated. A death tax report had to be filed. The probate judge refused to appoint the young widow, a brilliant and able person, as administratrix, instead naming a crony lawyer as administrator and trustee. She received only a "widow's dowry" and for eighteen years (until her youngest child reached maturity) had no voice in the management of the estate, which consisted largely of money. From that simple estate the trustee exacted over \$20 000 in fees while the widow struggled to hold her family together. If the wife had died instead of the husband, there would have been no probate, no loss of control over the bank account, no estate tax report, no administrator, no trustee, no husband's "dowry," and no children's "portion." In Nashville when a wealthy man died, the IRS promptly collected a death tax, and when the wife died two months later, they collected again. If the wife had died first, there would have been only one death tax.

What is the basis of such legal discriminations? The very assumption of my former student that women are subordinate creatures. A subordinate belongs to a sub order or species. A subordinate does not have the rights and privileges of the superordinate. To try to exercise these rights makes the subordinate guilty of insubordination, the pulpit version being "exercising authority over men." I do not have to be infallible to know that the wild pulpit opposition to the ERA about which I wrote bears a direct relation to such church-made rules as the following: women, like children, must be seen and not heard; women cannot vocalize a prayer in the presence of men; women cannot read aloud from the scriptures; women cannot speak standing up; women cannot sing solos; women cannot usher; women cannot serve the loaf and the cup at the common meal; women cannot teach a mixed class above puberty age; women cannot be deacons; women cannot attend business meetings. These rules are an inseparable part of the legalism which Mr. Key very properly deplors.

There are rational arguments against the ERA. One is that the present system of discrimination offers women some advantages, such as in alimony and child-custody cases. But

the major thrust of my article was that in the cases I had observed in Oklahoma, Texas, and Tennessee to influence legislative action, Church of Christ pulpits ignored these down-to-earth arguments in favor of baseless, inflammatory, fear-arousing, and extreme claims with the intent of swamping the legislature with letters and phone calls. The technique was not informative, but manipulative, and therefore morally wrong. This was particularly so when inspired by a man accepted as the chief pastor, authoritative expositor of God's will, counselor to the troubled, priest of the flock, and defender of the faith. Unexamined charges that the ERA will force church taxation, require "firewomen" to sleep in the same bed with firemen, abolish women's restrooms, require ordination of women, require all mothers to work and put their children in federal compulsory day-care centers, and require women to bear arms in integrated units with men—such charges are utterly devoid of integrity. Maybe Mr. Key can whitewash them, but I cannot.

I will not reply to my former student's disquisition on Gal. 3:28 except to say it is not a hermeneutical approach. Otherwise, it would reduce this moving passage to one of mere historical significance, saying nothing to our discriminatory religious and social order. His proposition was merely the hoary "coram Deo" theme preached from every pulpit in the antebellum South in defense of slavery as a divine and benevolent institution. There may be contemporary theologians of repute who accept his exegesis, but I have never read one.

Murfreesboro, Tennessee NORMAN L. PARKS

The Value of Fine Clothing

[After arriving in Florida] I went to a local Church of Christ where a friend . . . is the minister. I wore bluejeans and work boots, and out of that whole congregation, just one person (besides [the minister]) greeted me.

So I bet this person \$5.00 (which, needless to say, I won't attempt to collect) that if I returned next week—but dressed up—at least four people would greet me.

Next Sunday, and I arrive in a \$235 Petrolini suit borrowed from a friend. Get this—not only do eleven people greet me, but I'm even asked to help serve communion! And I don't even believe in present day communion! Shades of James 2, wouldn't you say?

Sarasota, Florida

MARK SMITH

INTEGRITY

THE ELDER BROTHER REDEEMED

One of my most despicable duties as heavenly observer of ecclesiastical affairs is recording Sunday sermons. It can be the most disturbing and exasperating experience, as it was today.

It seems like every mealy-mouthed pulpiter was extolling the grace and mercy of the Lord and had as their text the parable of the prodigal son. It is amazing how quickly sound exegetical principles are forgotten in the haste to speak about God's redeeming love.

You would think it would be obvious that old St. Luke has once again become carried away with his gospel for the Gentiles and suppressed the original Semitic message. As a result, the Gentiles are exalted in the prodigal son and the Jews condemned in the elder brother, while God is praised as the savior of the ungodly.

This may be fine in theory, but it just doesn't work in practice. As any Christian should know well by now, it is difficult enough to accept a returning prodigal who has wallowed with digressives and denominationalists, much less one who has lived with harlots and social outcasts.

In contrast, the virtues of the elder son are obvious: he was a dedicated and faithful worker, a man with high principles. It should not be incomprehensible why he refused to celebrate the return of his younger brother. It had nothing to do

with a selfish incapacity to forgive, but rather a loyal commitment to truth. As a member of a reputable non-instrumental synagogue, he could never set forth into a house of worship where there was music and dancing. It was bad enough for his brother to return with empty pockets without dragging along with him the flute-players and prostitutes of the far country.

The elder brother's reward for respecting the silence of the Scriptures has been the abuse and ridicule of all earthling preachers. Their unjust criticism would vanish immediately if they knew that he is now one of God's most trusted angelic servants and one of my closest friends.

It would be a real delight to have these critics witness the worship of the heavenly hosts in the New Jerusalem Temple. For the elder brother is now the director of the chorus composed of the former harp-playing elders and angel trumpeters of the Apocalypse.

After sharing with him the contents of the morning's sermon transcripts, it was difficult not to smile when he led the choir unaccompanied by mechanical instruments in their favorite hymn:

*How sweet the sound of a cappella in
Yahweh's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
and drives away his fear.*

—Gabriel Cloudburst