

*INTEGRITY*, a journal published bimonthly by an independent nonprofit corporation, is intended to be a ministry of reconciliation which utilizes the varied talents of a large community of believers. These believers, united in faith, but divergent in opinions, seek to accurately reveal God to both the church and the world so that all may become one as He is one. Accordingly, it should not be assumed that the views expressed by individual authors necessarily represent the opinions of either the editors or the Board as a whole.

## Readers' Response

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I have been encouraged, built up and stimulated by many of the articles in your publication. I especially enjoyed the writings concerning the work of the Holy Spirit today. May God bless you for your faithfulness in the ministry of His grace.  
November/December, 1986

I think I have been in touch with *Integrity* almost since the beginning, and it came at a time when I felt like I was in a "spiritual desert." It continues to be an "oasis" in the midst of my pilgrimage...the

Lord has not taken me out of [home town] as I prayed years ago, but rather has brought special people into my life and special "manna" to keep me "fed"...*Integrity* is a definite part of that "manna."

May you continue to let the Lord use you in this much needed way to encourage his people to keep on keeping on. Being in the "Bible Belt" is not necessarily a plus!

November/December, 1989

# Integrity

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## 1969-1994 Twenty-Five Years of *Integrity*

This year we have been treated to the memories of two very different 25th anniversaries: the first moon walk and the music festival Woodstock. During this past July and August, anyone near a radio or television relived these events. We saw the replays of the distant, blurred figure of Neil Armstrong step down on the moon and heard his historic line: "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." We watched the flashbacks of skinny-dipping flower children and heard the loud electric rock music of the bands that seem mild by today's standards. Where have we come in those 25 years? The triumphs of space program and science have not solved many of our human problems. The free love and drugs philosophies associated with Woodstock have left many dead, including Woodstock performers Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Tim Hardin, Alan Wilson, and Paul Butterfield. Neither science, nor technology, nor drugs, nor free love, nor music, have been able to free us from despair, disease, hate, or sin.

The last 25 years have emphasized that the essential human questions are not: can we go to the moon, or should we take drugs? The essential questions are: who are we, what must we do to be saved, and how do we help each other? The answer, of course, is: Jesus. Most *Integrity* readers agree on that. But after that, we have many points of disagreement. Over the life of *Integrity* we have tried to emphasize this essential while discussing its implications for our unity.

Can you stand another 25th anniversary? *Integrity's* first issue was also 25 years ago, June 1969. Its debut was just prior to the walk on the moon in July and Woodstock in August. That first issue contained these articles: "Integrity" by Hoy Ledbetter, "Congregational Independence" by Dean Thoroman, "Lord Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace" by John Smith, "Of Wine and Wineskins" by David Elkins, and "The Ins and Outs, Ups and Downs, Populars and Unpopulars" by Frank Rester. The first editorial by Hoy Ledbetter entitled "Integrity" discussed the meaning of the word "integrity," then summed up the journal's purpose: "to encourage believers in Christ to strive to be one, to be pure, and to be honest and sincere in word and deed, among ourselves and toward all men (and women, we should add today)."

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## Integrity...Then and Now

AMOS PONDER and HOY LEDBETTER

With the May/June 1994 issue *Integrity* completed twenty-five years of publication. Throughout the years we have endeavored to adhere to our original purpose of addressing the needs of Christians in as sensitive a way as possible, publishing articles dealing with current issues, and providing an open forum for sharing of thoughts.

The name of the journal is actually a good one-word summary of its reason for being. When its founders were trying to decide on a name for it, Jary Ledbetter, after listening to a prolonged discussion of concerns, suggested we call it "Integrity." That name was quickly agreed upon, for, as it implies, our intention was to always be honest and fair and to always be biblical.

A compelling question was how a diverse communion, which we had always been, could maintain fellowship without constantly fighting and devouring one another and breaking into factions. It was a question, as our readers would often indicate, that was of intense interest, not only within our movement, but also among people who had only viewed our peculiar controversies from a distance.

As our writers discussed such issues as the decision-making process in the church, authoritarianism and the scriptural view of power, the nature of fellowship, the restoration principle, and the divisive pattern concept our brotherhood had espoused, readers applauded the material as reasonable and biblical, and a necessary corrective to the trends of recent generations.

Over the years we have dealt at length with timely issues, such as the role of women in the church, divorce and remarriage, the charismatic movement,

homosexuality, excommunication, the nature of the church, and problems of living in "this present evil age." Our writers have come across as honest seekers of truth. And we believe they still do.

### Changes In Leaders, Mechanics, Readers

The leadership has changed considerably since that first issue went forth, and yet there has been continuity of purpose. In the beginning, there were 11 or 12 Board members, all of whom were living in the Flint area. There have been about 42 different Board members, and at the moment there are 15. About half of the present Board members have served for over ten years, two for fifteen years, one for twenty years, and one is an original member. All live in Michigan in order that we can all meet together regularly. The original Board consisted entirely of members of the Church of Christ, and all of the present members have a background in the different segments of the restoration movement.

In the early years of publishing *Integrity*, the Board was mostly concerned with the mechanics of getting the magazine out. All of the work was done by Board members and friends, such as printing, assembly, stapling, folding, and mailing. These things, and especially financing, consumed much of our meetings. Most of the financing was from the Board. Now the costs are shared by many of the readers, and printing and mailing is handled by the print shop. The Board can now spend its time in discussing current issues and needs and how articles can best meet those needs.

Although some of the original Board members perhaps were thinking of a local publication dealing only with local issues, others had a wider vision. This was voiced by founding editor Hoy Ledbetter in the January, 1970 issue, who said, "Integrity did not begin for the purpose of carrying on a local fight." In the same issue he reported that "we have readers in about two-thirds of the states and several foreign countries." *Integrity* grew very rapidly at that point.

Articles were written primarily by Board members until March, 1970, when we began publishing material from people from other states. As the readership grew the quality of the articles also improved. This was in part because of the many contributing writers. *Integrity* receives and welcomes unsolicited articles.

Readers' responses have also contributed to the quality of the paper. Through the responses it was discovered that what were considered local problems by some were not local at all but were very widespread. Repeated expressions such as "what I've been looking for for years" and "a breath of fresh air" indicated that *Integrity* was touching at least some of the readers' needs.

*Integrity* is helped not only by the positive responses but also by the critical ones. The Board probably spends more time in meetings discussing the critical than the positive. Most of a recent meeting was spent on one critical reaction. It is this kind of response that helps us to maintain our policy, methods, and sensitivity in handling an issue. The positive remarks encourage us and let us know when we are being somewhat effective, and the critical remarks help us keep focused on the part of our statement of purpose which insists, "Our writers will speak with dignity, and seriousness, honestly expressing the truth they have received from God."

## Have We Maintained Our Integrity?

Although there have been many changes in *Integrity*, we still try to adhere to our original purpose. Change is not only necessary but it is inevitable. What we try not to change are the basic ideas of the original intent of *Integrity*, which are sharing the good news of Christ, publishing scripturally responsible and thought-provoking articles, promoting unity among all believers, providing a forum and an opportunity for readers to respond, and being under obedience to God and dependent upon his guidance.

Has the paper maintained its integrity? In looking over some of the recent issues of *Integrity* we noticed articles dealing with the following: Assisted suicide, worship in the assembly, unity, the gospel, the Holy Spirit, incarnation, practical application of God's truths, missions, small churches, women, and many others too numerous to mention. There is space for readers' responses in nearly all of the issues and articles from many different authors. We feel that *Integrity* has maintained its purpose, but we also continuously try to improve it.

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Amos Ponder is vice-president of the *Integrity* Board of Directors and an original Board member. Besides serving as an elder at the Fenton Church of Christ-Christian Church, Amos has also preached and helped start new congregations in Michigan. He retired from General Motors and presently resides in Flint, Michigan with his wife, Janet.

Hoy Ledbetter, founding editor and Editor-in-Chief of *Integrity* for 15 years, has served as minister to several a cappella Churches of Christ during his years of ministry. He currently serves First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Albany, Georgia with his wife, Jary.

## Grasp Of The Kingdom...An Ecumenical Perspective

JOSEPH F. JONES

Since its inception in 1969, *Integrity* has sought to herald the good news of God's kingdom, the manifestation of God's sovereign rule in the person of Jesus Christ (*Integrity*, Statement of Purpose, Feb. 1975). Those who have heard the call of the gospel and surrendered to his sovereignty in Jesus the Lord are seen in the New Testament as Christians, fashioned together in a spiritual Body known as the church (Acts 2:36-38; I Cor. 12:12, 13). Under his Lordship these believers are in the kingdom.

From this New Testament perspective came one of the basic themes of our Restoration fathers (i.e. the Stone-Campbell Movement): that we wanted to be Christians only, not necessarily the only Christians in the historic church. *Integrity* founders and writers accepted this biblical theme as essential in any grasp of the kingdom. In order to understand better the mission of Christ and the nature of his church, *Integrity* was committed to "an intensive inquiry into the origins of the Christian community and our religious heritage" (*Integrity*, Feb., 1975). And this commitment has been one of the stabilizing anchors of *Integrity's* ministry through the twenty-five years of its existence.

### Implementing Our Purpose

In our efforts to implement this idealistic goal, *Integrity* leaders recognized the need for authority, turning to the Word of God as "the ultimate criterion for determining the authenticity of everything the church is and does" (*Integrity*, Feb. 1975). They consequently emphasized a Christ-centered hermeneutic based upon keen exegetical study of the Scriptures in their historical context, with relevant application to our contemporary church and the needs of

individual believers.

*Integrity* editors and other writers have recognized that the Christian life embraces right relationships in the Body of Christ, and this aspect of our purpose has led to a concerted effort for the past quarter century toward providing answers to the ever-recurring questions of fellowship and unity. Those responsible for guiding *Integrity's* direction have continued to believe "that all Christians must share the responsibility of determining the meaning of Jesus Christ in our lives and that the Spirit of truth is not confined to any conclave of believers" (*Integrity*, Feb. 1975). We have accordingly welcomed sincere and responsible response from all believers who recognize Jesus as Lord, irrespective of their convictions on the multiple and various issues which have surfaced within the life of the church. The sectarian affiliation of brothers and sisters in our own Stone-Campbell movement has not deterred us from seeing with Thomas Campbell that "the church of Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one."

### Barriers To Implementation

Jesus' fervent prayer and desire for the church was that his disciples might all be one, even as he and the Father are one (John 17:20, 21). This prayer has pricked the conscience of the historic Christian church through the centuries, leading to numerous restoration and renewal movements. It was Christ's stirring prayer set in contrast with the rigid denominational world of their day that fired the minds and hearts of such men as Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, "Raccoon" John Smith, Walter Scott, and countless other less known leaders to launch a movement toward the "restoration of New Testament

Christianity." Essential in this restoration effort was the oneness and unity of God's people; and, consequently, there developed the concept of a "pattern theology" which was believed to be an adequate basis for Christian unity. But, grievously, "pattern theology" raised more questions eventually than it answered, giving rise to numerous barriers in the implementation of the Restoration movement's goals.

Through the past twenty-five years, *Integrity* has focused attention on many of these barriers which have separated Christian believers, narrowing our grasp of the kingdom, restricting our sense and practice of fellowship, and erecting the same kind of walls between peoples that Jesus came to break down (Eph. 2:11-22). The more recent work of some Restoration scholars and other students has produced some of the more ludicrous, if not so terribly serious, matters which separate brothers and sisters in Christ (see Cecil Hook, *Free in Christ*, pp. 4-9).

### Volatile Issues Which Divide

Neither space nor time permit me to enumerate many of the issues which have blurred our vision and grasp of the kingdom; nor is it really necessary to do so. But a careful review of *Integrity* through twenty-five years of multiple articles will lead one to see some of the sources of division and sectarianism, some of the specific issues and ugly emotional/spiritual mentality, which have blighted our own Restoration movement. Such issues and attitudes have thwarted the realization of Jesus' prayer for oneness; and stifled for many either the acceptance of Jesus as Lord, or the fulfillment of his Lordship in the lives of those who already believe.

*Integrity* has addressed many of these divisive issues through the years, pleading for openness of heart and intellectual integrity, for brotherly and sisterly love to accept one another as Christ has accepted all of us, to the glory

of God (Rom. 15:7). We have contended for the freedom to differ without being divisive, giving diligence to maintain the unity which the Spirit has given in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3 NEB). How ironic that belief in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life has occasioned bitter disagreement and broken fellowship. The pattern of ministry and church organization have at times stirred bitter wrangling and factionalism (*Integrity*, Feb. 1974). Hoy Ledbetter, founding editor of *Integrity*, and the late Carl Ketcherside, have written extensively on the evils of sectarianism in severing the fellowship and unity of God's people. Baptism and its relationship to fellowship have been periodically explored by such writers as Craig Watts, Thomas Lane, Leroy Garrett, and David Griggs (Jan./Feb. 1977).

Vital to the church's life and progress is a clear understanding of the decision-making process within the Body. What is the nature and function of elders? Who has final voice in congregational decision-making? (see April/May, 1977). *Integrity* has addressed with deep concern the castigating of those who differ with party-line positions as theological liberals, contributing further to the brokenness of our brotherhood and subsequent rejection of some of our most competent and committed Christian scholars. *Integrity* has stood for healthy biblical clarification of issues, sound theological thinking and concepts, and the eradication of loveless, critical judgement on one's fellow Christians.

### The Cross And The Kingdom

How is the church ever to bring men and women to a clearer grasp of the kingdom and those who are in it, even if some are not of our own "enclave of believers?" The answer is in Jesus' own words: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all people to myself" (John 12:32 New RSV). Significant as the work has been of our "Restoration fathers," there was, as

Professor Leonard Allen so poignantly concluded, "the subtle but serious displacement of the cross in the heritage of Churches of Christ...a displacement of the cross as the focal point of Christian life" (*The Cruciform Church*, p. 125). The "core gospel," as Dr. Bill Love characterizes it, of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection did not receive its rightful place in Restoration theology; and this emptiness in the preaching of Christ crucified and raised has contributed primarily to the continued sectarianism and brokenness among disciples of Jesus (see Bill Love, *The Core Gospel*, entire book).

*Integrity* will continue to hold high the message of Jesus Christ crucified, the "power and wisdom of God" to save those

## Editorial

(Continued from page 82)

Anniversaries are usually a time to celebrate and reflect. As long as we don't get stuck trying to nostalgically live in the past, anniversaries can be a time for learning and for growth for the future.

We invite you to celebrate and reflect with us about *Integrity's* 25 years. Our 25 years are not quite as exciting as a walk on the moon, nor have we produced a spectacle like Woodstock. But we have tried to deal with cutting edge issues that have eternal significance. Together, we ride this small planet during an instant in history. Twenty-five years is only a spec in the cosmos, but it is more than a third of the time we have been allotted. What have we done with it? What will we do with the next 25 years, should the Lord grant us another?

We have room to remember only a few of the issues that have been discussed and debated by the church

who believe (I Cor. 1:22-25). It is the focus of the church under the cross that will be the commonality for all believers. It is the Gospel of the Kingdom---the message of a crucified but risen Lord at whose feet we all must humbly bow. For he, if lifted up, will draw all people to himself. This is the vision of the kingdom, our grasp of God's sovereign rule, which *Integrity* will continue to proclaim.

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Dr. Joseph F. Jones has ministered to the Church of Christ in Troy, Michigan, for more than 25 years. He holds doctorates in the field of higher education and pastoral counseling. Joseph has worked and written for *Integrity* magazine since its earliest days and has served as president of the Board for more than 12 years.

during these last twenty-five years. But we believe that each issue discussed in this anniversary issue will have significant consequences for the body of Christ in the coming years, especially for that part of the body that goes by the name of Church of Christ.

We invite you to keep up the dialogue with us. We will not shrink from any issue, no matter how controversial. From articles about grace and the Holy Spirit, to women's role, divorce, baptism, unity, church leadership, abortion, homosexuality, inspiration of the Scriptures, Christians and politics, our goal is to publish articles that help each of us grow in Christ, take up the cross of Christ, and take the message of his cross to the world.

J. Bruce and Diane G. H. Kilmer  
Co-Editors

# Integrity On The Holy Spirit, Past And Future

ELTON AND LAQUITA HIGGS

Some of us have lived long enough to have experienced notable changes in the church, and one of those changes in the last two or three decades is the recognition of the work of the Holy Spirit. The church used to teach, as some still do today, that the Holy Spirit works only through the written Word. According to that teaching, the gifts of the Spirit were only for the Apostolic period and are not for today, so there was not much point in studying about the Holy Spirit, since it seemed to have little to do with us. That limiting of the work of the Spirit left us crippled and desiccated, with little sense of personal relationship to God or of the power available to assist us in our struggles. A vital element was missing in the make-up of the Kingdom.

In the late 1960's and early 1970's books detailing what the Holy Spirit was doing in the lives of Christians today began to be published. It was an exciting time, marking the emergence of the "charismatic renewal," but this movement soon developed its own set of problems, primarily in the attitudes of the two sides which quickly polarized: the charismatics and the traditionalists. Although there was blessed renewal, healing, and wholeness for many who had a new experience of the Holy Spirit, there were some "charismatics" who fell prey to wrong attitudes, manifesting a certain smugness and self-righteousness about having The Truth--ironically, an attitude from which they purported to be escaping. Some even gloried in being the rebels, talking proudly of belonging to the "Royal Order of the Boot," since most of them had been "booted out" of the church. Since the local church usually did not want them, they developed small groups in homes which, all too often, became self-centered. Some questionable beliefs, such as the teaching that only those who spoke in tongues were true Christians,

found currency among them.

On the other side, some of the traditionalists were fearful of the charismatics, assuming, usually without any real consideration of the subject, that charismatics were bringing false teaching into the church. Besides, no one wanted to be a "Holy Roller"; that was too low class. The insecurity felt by the traditionalists made them unkind. Old friendships were destroyed, family members declared that their charismatic relatives had "fallen from the faith," and charismatic preachers and their families were suddenly deprived of their income. Known charismatics were viewed with apprehension when they visited other mainline churches.

The church was obviously in need of clear teaching on the subject of the Holy Spirit. Although articles in *Integrity* having to do with the life of the Spirit appeared only sporadically before 1980, two issues in the early 1980's and almost all of the issues in 1984 concentrated on matters of the Holy Spirit. It was hard to be objective on a subject which had evoked so much emotion, but *Integrity* played its small part by attempting to publish articles that would reflect biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit. In April/May 1980, the theme was "Renewal and the Holy Spirit;" the August/September issue in 1983 was on spiritual strength and guidance in the family. Although the 1984 series did not neglect the more spectacular gifts of the Spirit (such as tongues and prophecy), there was a consensus that the most significant work of the Spirit is in the everyday life of the church and the development of individual character.

If any idea runs consistently through *Integrity's* treatment of the Holy Spirit, it is that the Spirit brings renewal; it is our belief that in the future, *Integrity* and the church need to explore that renewal and

growth (characterized as the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23) in three specific directions:

1) Walking with Jesus. The Holy Spirit *always* points us to Jesus, even convicting the newly-confronted sinner of his or her need for redemption. Since the role of the Holy Spirit is to magnify Jesus, the Spirit was probably embarrassed at having so much attention centered on himself in isolation in the 1970s. Submitting ourselves to the work of God's Spirit produces the character of Jesus, with the resultant fruits of love, joy, and peace, which are the vital signs that God himself lives and reigns within.

2) With each other. The Spirit brings unity and peace. His presence within us produces the fruits of patience, kindness, and goodness, which go a long way toward producing the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The divisions in the 1970s over "charismatic gifts" were not the work of the Holy Spirit, but of the Enemy, who was all too busy and successful in sowing discord (Ichabod and Apollyon were hard at work!).

3) With the world. The Spirit gives us the power to be witnesses (Acts 1:8), but part of our power comes because we have an integrity of the soul evidenced by the fruits of faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. The world should be impressed by our humility and our disciplined lives, but they should be even more struck by the fact that these qualities spring from our faithfulness to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In quiet but significant ways the resurgence of interest in the Holy Spirit over the past 25 years has affected the church, though unfortunately not always positively. In order to build on the real work of the Spirit during recent years, we as Christians need to gain a greater sense of personal relationship with Jesus, a new sense of the worth of prayer and the power of God in our lives today, a new emphasis on deep and meaningful worship, and a new sense of the broader fellowship of Christians. All of these are areas of challenge in a world rife with materialism and the spirit of Anti-Christ. The Board of *Integrity* will be committed in whatever years it continues to be on the scene to draw its readers' attention to the love of God, manifested supremely in the incarnation, sacrifice, intercession, and glorification of Jesus, pointed to and illuminated by the work of the Holy Spirit.

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Elton D. Higgs, also a graduate of Abilene Christian University, is a professor of Medieval Literature at University of Michigan, Dearborn. As a member of the *Integrity* Board, Elton has dedicated time and skills to this magazine's ministry for 15 years.

## Thank You!

Our sincere thanks to all of you who have taken the time to send in your contribution and/or Reader Survey forms. The Board of Directors appreciates your continuing support of our efforts to fulfill the Statement of Purpose under which we function (and which is reprinted on page 99 of this issue). To those who have not, please take a few minutes and send in your response and/or contribution.

## Integrity And The Role Of Women In The Church

J. BRUCE KILMER

An overview of 25 years of *Integrity* articles reveals that, from the very beginning, *Integrity* addressed the issue of women's role in the church. In the September 1970 issue, the founding editor, Hoy Ledbetter, questioned the interpretation of I Corinthians 14:24-35 and I Timothy 2:11-12 which would allow a woman to speak out in Bible classes but which would forbid her to speak out in worship services. He noted:

"I have taught Bible classes which included ten times as many adults as some entire congregations I have addressed. Why should a woman be allowed to speak in one and not in the other? Why could she ask a question in a class of 150 adults and not do the same in a 'congregation' of 15 plus children? Is the presence of children the basis of the restriction? Does the New Testament distinguish between 'formal' and 'informal' gatherings, between 'Bible classes' and 'worship services'? Does it give women liberty in 'Bible classes' and not in 'worship services'? No."

Some 24 years later, women in the majority of the Churches of Christ are still bound by this inconsistent interpretation.

In the July 1977 issue, Robert Randolph lamented: "It is a bitter paradox that one of the church's contributions to western society is that it has raised the status of women while never affording them equality within the institution itself." Even in a fellowship where in most of the churches women could not so much as pray aloud, he had hope: "I suspect that women ministers will not be unknown by the end of the next quarter century."

In the January 1973 issue Norman Parks urged us to "Set Our Women Free." He wrote:

"Perhaps in no area is Church of Christ thought so legalistic, literalistic,

and backward as on woman's role in the congregation. In neither thought nor practice are we even abreast of the first century church."

Parks pointed out that the "role of women" issue is not just an area of doctrinal difference where we can sit back and say that what we believe does not matter:

"The two most serious charges against the subordination of women to the near-status of children are that it has impoverished the church by wasting the creative energies of the majority of every congregation and has done grave psychological damage to the psyche of untold numbers of potential Marys, Priscas, and Joannas of our time."

Norman Parks ended his 1973 article with this warning to men:

"The freedom that is in Christ Jesus will remain under a shadow until we come resolutely to grips with all those hangups which have handicapped the psychological and spiritual growth of women in the ecclesia. To conclude on an ominous note: What if the males of the church have to give an account on the day of judgment for all those talents buried through the ages simply because they were given to women?"

### Freedom From Carnality

In 1973, six out of the eleven issues of *Integrity* had articles or letters about women's role in the church. In October of 1973, in her article, "God's Men, Women, and Donkeys," Rosann McArthur reminded us that carnality was a major factor which prevented the Corinthians from becoming all they were intended to be in Christ Jesus. She defined carnality as our human nature living as if that is all there is, devoid of the spiritual, and

without God. None of us can completely escape our carnality in this world, but in Christ we can become more and more controlled by the Spirit. McArthur wrote that it was carnality which led to the first sin and the consequences of man ruling over woman. And it is this same carnality which can still prevent us from accepting one another as equals in the church today. It is our identity and unity in Christ and his Spirit which will allow us to overcome our carnality. Rosann McArthur wrote:

"Carnality among Christians is not unrelated to the question of woman's participation in worship. Woman, being the first to fall into carnality, has most frequently been the first to want out of it. And, as Jesus taught (Luke 11:9-13), desire is an important requisite to achievement. It is my belief, based on observation and experience, that the very personal consequences to woman of the fall, affecting her body, soul and spirit, have caused her to see her predicament more readily, and therefore have induced her to search for and receive the way back more readily. (This view attributes no special merit to woman; it is merely the way God has made her.) The way back for her, of course, is Jesus Christ, who brings her back to the Father's deep communion and perfect freedom."

... Being one in Christ transcends the order of creation, everything carnal, and even His own laws. Even Paul says that 'in the Lord' men and women are not separate or independent. He uses the expression 'in the Lord' several times in his letters to show that our behavioral relations with carnal believers are different from those with spiritual believers. Both men and women who have received, and are receiving, the things of Christ will so recognize each other and can have, even here and now, the wonderful fellowship and oneness in

the body of the Lord to which he has called them. Paul asserts: '. . . there is not male and female, for you are all ONE IN CHRIST JESUS' (Gal. 3:28)."

Janet Allison spoke for many other women in her article "A Woman's Response to Women's Lib," in the September 1974 issue, when she wrote, "I am not an advocator of 'Woman's Lib.' I do not feel I need to be liberated. I am happy in my role as a woman and do not feel I am being discriminated against." Mrs. Allison stated in her article that it might appear inconsistent for her to be teaching through the pages of *Integrity*, while advocating that women should not teach men. I think it's interesting that none of the women who have taken me personally to task, either verbally or in writing, publicly or privately, have recognized this inconsistency in their own behavior.

### The ERA Movement

In the March 1975 issue, as many in the church fought against the Equal Rights Amendment, Norman Parks once again wrote for women, reminding us that Jesus had freed women from the "badges of inferiority and discrimination imposed on them since the fall of Adam . . ." The church ought to be following Christ's example since "it was not Congress but Holy Writ which said that in Christ's new order 'there is no male and female.'"

In the June 1975 issue, Harold Key took issue with his former professor, Dr. Parks, concerning the need for the ERA and Park's interpretation of Galatians 3:28. Regarding Paul's statement that there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male and female, Key argued that "in both the immediate context and that of the entire Galatian epistle, this verse has to do with the means of justification before God." Key also found it "bothersome" that there were no women among the Twelve Apostles. Key saw submission as a principle of orderliness rather than inferiority.

Almost 12 years later, as I wrote "Freedom for Men and Women" which appeared in the January/February 1987 issue (this article was revised and reprinted again in the September/October 1992 issue), I remembered Harold Key's article. In mine I attempted to explain that in Gal. 3:28, Paul was not just referring to whether Greeks, slaves, and women could be saved. In Galatians Paul was explaining not only justification, but the results of justification. That was why he had to oppose Peter to his face when Peter was eating with the Greeks (Galatians 2). Salvation makes a difference in our social relationships.

Taking off on the word "freedom" from the title to my 1987 article, Ronald Fisher argued in the November/December 1988 issue that "freedom" must be found "within God's appointments." He believed that God has gender-based roles for men and women in the church. Fisher, like Harold Key, found Jesus' failure to name a female Apostle as indicative of God's plan for leadership. I responded at the time that Jesus also did not choose any Gentile Apostles. And I asked, was this indicative of God's plan for leadership in the church today?

In the July/August 1991 issue, my article entitled "Women in God's Plan," pointed out numerous inconsistencies in the way the church treats the role of women. I also argued that patriarchy, like monarchy, polygamy and war, is recorded in the Old Testament, without being God-ordained. The role of women in the church today is limited far more than even a conservative exegesis of the Bible demands. Therefore, I reasoned, the church, without agreeing on the "ultimate earthly authority" between the sexes, or even if there is such a thing, could allow women much more freedom than it does. This freedom would lessen the handicap which we have artificially placed on half of our members. A fuller use of the gifts of all our members would be realized and would help the church in carrying out its mission to the lost.

## Women And The Church's Work

Many in the church today disagree on the role women should have in the work of the church. But what is the work of the church? Do we not need all the workers we can marshal, each of them using as fully as possible the gifts God has given them? The biblical examples of women workers are too numerous to ignore: Prisca, Phoebe, Junia, Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis (Rom. 16), Euodia, Syntyche (Phil. 4:2), the "not a few prominent women" at Thessalonica (Acts 17:4), "a number of prominent Greek women" at Berea (Acts 17:12), Lydia and the congregation of women at Philippi (Acts 16:14), and Philip's four daughters who were prophetesses (Acts 21:9). These women were leaders, ministers, evangelists, and missionaries in the early church.

Hoy Ledbetter's article "Women in the Church at Rome" (May/June 1982) is a study of the words used to describe these women and their work in the first century church. Careful examination shows that these first century women were not limited to leading women's Bible studies and cooking the agape meals (though these were and are important responsibilities). These New Testament women were also involved in the leadership of the church and in the proclamation of the gospel. Even in the early days of the Restoration Movement, we recognized the role women could play in the proclamation of the gospel. C. Leonard Allen has documented this in his book *Distant Voices: Discovering A Forgotten Past For A Changing Church*. In the January/February 1993 issue we reprinted the chapter from this book: "Your Daughters Shall Prophesy: Female Preachers in the Early Restoration Movement."

In a booklet written by Darrell Foltz entitled: *The Christian Woman May Pray in the Public Worship Assembly* (promoted in an Editor's Note in the March/April 1993 issue), Foltz reasoned

that even if we cannot agree on whether women can be elders or on the meaning of headship, surely we can at least agree to use the gifts of women to a greater extent than we have.

## A Vision And A Challenge

As I traced the articles, letters, and editorials on this issue through the last 25 years of *Integrity*, strong impressions surfaced.

First, although *Integrity* has published articles on both sides of the women's role issue, the majority of articles and responses have promoted allowing greater freedom for women.

Secondly, I was struck by how little we have changed. It's amazing how far in the other direction we have come since Nancy Dram, Abigail Roberts, Nancy Twole, and Nancy Mulkey preached in the early days of the Restoration Movement ("Your Daughters Shall Prophesy: Female Preachers in the Early Restoration Movement," January/February 1993).

Third, there seems to be very few men who advocate for a broader role for women in the church. This is expected from those who believe a broader role for women would not be biblical. However, I suspect that many men believe the Bible allows a broader role for women than has been allowed them, but are not willing to speak out for fear of rocking the boat. Is it possible that a fear of the radical feminist movement, a fear of the "slippery slope," or perhaps even male gender insecurities have kept many men from advocating for what they intellectually believe is right? It is up to men in leadership to speak out, if they believe women's gifts are being quenched. Like Paul in opposing Peter, we must risk rocking the boat. Women with teaching and leadership gifts must be allowed opportunities to use them in the church. Many women make able leaders, and we in the church are the poorer for our failure

to use all the gifts of every member of the body.

Fourth, we seem to have very little idea of how to experience unity over this issue without arbitrarily having things one way or the other. But we *can have unity* in the midst of conscientious diversity! If those who limit women's roles, limit only themselves, and those who do not limit women's roles, do not demand that all women lead or participate in a certain way, one congregation can house two views—with plenty of room in between. Each of us must seek to use the gifts God has given us. We must not force our gifts on others, just as they must not quench the gifts God's Spirit has given us. Some women do not want to lead, or even participate, in any public way. Some women do not have leadership gifts just as some men do not. None should be forced to lead, but likewise, those who have gifts should not be forced to stifle them, or to use them only outside of the church.

I think that the role we allow women in the church is one of the major issues facing the Church of Christ today. And I believe *how* each congregation faces this issue will be a major factor in how effective an influence for Christ the Church of Christ will be in the 21st century.

In the May/June 1982 issue, Hoy Ledbetter concluded his study of the "Women in the Church at Rome" with a challenge worth our consideration regarding the next 25 years:

"This chapter (Romans 16) invites several questions about the nature and constituency of the church at Rome, and we do not as yet have a clear answer to many of them. But one thing is beyond doubt: Paul viewed with the highest respect his sisters in the church and was pleased to acknowledge their considerable influence upon and service to the community. In that respect he was way ahead of many in his time -- and

in ours too, for that matter. We could hardly hope for more than that we today would catch up with Paul in recognizing the vital function of women as 'coworkers in Christ Jesus.'

Perhaps we could do no better than to close this discussion with a question posed long ago by one of our forefathers in the reformation:

'Is there no work to be done by Christian women of the present day, which would rank them among noble women named in this chapter? I confess to think the question worthy of something more than a sarcastic smile. We have Marys capable of work, and more than willing. Whose

tyrannous hand, then, is it that lets? Dreams are not the only things in which crooked lines and errors blend. Granitized church life might reveal some of them, if closely inspected (Moses E. Lard, Romans, 455).'

Whose tyrannous hand indeed?"

Bruce Kilmer grew up in the Churches of Christ (non-instrumental), and has served as an elder in the Church of Christ/Christian Church (independent). He has degrees from Abilene Christian University and Wayne State University Law School. Bruce has served on the *Integrity* Board of Directors for more than 14 years, 8 of them as Co-Editor.

those seemingly petty little meannesses that added up to this dying act. Now you look up to his face once more and whisper in complete awe, "My Lord and my God!"

Everything becomes quite clear--you know who you are and where you stand. The truth, though unspoken, is evident between you and the man on the cross: you are his creature, though you are bent and broken by evil. He loves you still and forgives you. And he is the medicine that can mend your brokenness.

When at last during this time-suspended moment you are able to stand up and look around, you are stunned to see who else is there, standing shoulder to shoulder with you at the foot of the cross. People from your own time and place in history:

neighbors you've fought with,  
co-workers who talk behind your back,  
bosses who have treated you unjustly,  
law enforcers you knew took bribes,

the teenager who killed your loved one while driving drunk,  
the teacher who publicly shamed you in childhood,  
your least favorite in-law,  
the liberal preacher you often mock,  
the politicians you would never say a prayer for,  
a teen gang member who sold drugs in your neighborhood,  
those people who have discriminated against you,  
church members that never give you the time of day,  
your ex-spouse--  
imagine them all there, experiencing the same opportunity in space and time that you have had at the foot of Jesus' cross. "Will he forgive them?" you wonder. But then you know. Of course, he will; they'll only need to accept it. Then another question enters your mind: will *you* forgive these enemies? Will you see them as Jesus sees them AND as he sees you...bent and broken, yet loved and forgiven? Or will you see yourself as better than they, somehow?

### Who Is My Neighbor?

It matters how you and I answer these questions back here in the 20th century. Jesus stated, "when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself," and he planned that those people gathered at his feet would be his church. The saying that "the cross is the great equalizer" is true whether we accept it or not. Even if my sins are worse than yours or vice versa, the same price had to be paid. Will we accept the possibility that both we and our enemy may walk in the same condition of forgiveness for the same reason? Jesus is more than disappointed when his drastic act of reconciliation on the cross is not reflected in our own individual acts of forgiveness toward others. Yet he leaves us free to choose.

The idea that all those who meet God's forgiveness at the foot of the cross

and accept it become our Christian family seems too simplistic. The main problem with stripping away most of the usual conditions we make necessary to identify "who is my brother or sister?" is just that--how will we know one when we see one? Even those followers who knew Jesus personally here on earth had the same trouble figuring out that same question.

Remember how Jesus responded when his disciples tried to stop a non-member of their group from casting demons out in Jesus' name? He said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward" (Mark 9:39-41).

So, how will you and I recognize members of "the church?" For one thing, a true Christian will openly admit to anyone that she or he believes that Jesus is the Son of God. But other identifying characteristics also appear in varying degrees among Jesus' followers:

\*an attitude of humility, of not being any better than others;

\*a self-denying habit of wanting to help others, even under extreme circumstances;

\*a loving heart; the use of loving words that encourage others; an almost tangible kind of love that exudes acceptance and kindness, amnesty and reconciliation; a love that is loyal and not self-serving;

\*a lifestyle and philosophical perspective that reflects more value on what is eternal than on material "things."

People who don't know God yet *do notice* people who love each other and share and help each other. They know the true church when they see it. And they don't care who has the "right" viewpoint on baptism, worship, mission methods or hermeneutics.

## A Vision For Integrity

DIANE G. H. KILMER

Please use your imagination for a moment to picture yourself standing on a hill at the foot of the cross of Jesus. Now imagine that somehow the boundaries of time have faded, and you find yourself not among the Jerusalem crowd, although you sense they are there somewhere because the sea of people stretches further than the eye can see in every direction.

In this imagined scene you are standing below Christ's feet and you know, because you heard everything explained back in the 20th century, why Jesus is hanging there. Your eyes meet, and from his eyes focussed on your face comes a look filled with a depth of love and compassion and complete understanding that drives deeply into your soul. You bow your head and drop to your knees and you cover your face with your hands because you remember your own sins for which he is dying. You recall with shame your big, selfish deeds and all



## What Is Our Vision?

Therefore, as we seek a vision that will shape our identity and the purpose of our life's actions, I see all the possibilities boiled down into two inseparable elements:

First, we are to "fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2).

And second, all our energies, all our actions must be spent being a loving, serving, cross-declaring church--which also happens to be the kind of church against which "the gates of Hell will not prevail," will *not* predominate, will *not* prove superior and will *not* overcome!

Any battle we take on must be with Hell, not with each other. All critical words and actions against other believers must stop. We must, instead, practice love toward each other, because:

every kind action matters,  
every decision to love,  
every loving thought,  
every choice to do good,  
every unselfish moment--

--all these human actions are crucial because they are the presence of the kingdom of God here on earth!

Our vision for *Integrity* journal is the same as every Christian's purpose: to encourage us, the church of Jesus, to take up our own crosses, imitate Christ's actions, and declare the good news:

"In this world you will have trouble.  
But take heart! [Jesus has] overcome the world!"

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Diane Kilmer grew up in the acapella Churches of Christ. She attended Michigan Christian Jr. College, Abilene Christian University, and received her B.A. in English from Michigan State University. Diane has served on the *Integrity* Board for more than 12 years, 8 of those years as Co-Editor.

## Readers' Response From The Last 25 Years

Someone suggested at the last *Integrity* Board meeting that it might be interesting to do a retrospect of letters received from our readers over the last 25 years--it was! The following is a sampling of the lively correspondence generated by *Integrity's* "open forum" style:

Have heard some good comments (which came in muffled whispers) and some negative, pious remarks against your new publication, *Integrity* (and these came with full-loaded lungs). With no need of further stimulus other than this, the keenest of publicity, please send me your monthly issues of *Integrity* and bill me accordingly.

September, 1969

I have been a member of the True Church of Christ for 54 years, and I do not see how anyone that ever has been a

member could go along with the liberal, modern views you people have.

Note (from Editor Ledbetter): Some put us on the right, some on the left, while others are bemused that they can't figure out which "faction" we belong to. We don't intend to promote any faction, to make a part out of Christ. We are not concerned with whether we are called liberal, conservative, or moderate, but rather with whether what we say is biblical, honest, and relevant.

October, 1969

We pray for you power and direction from God's Holy Spirit in your efforts to communicate Christ in our day. May He see fit to use *Integrity* for the awakening and blessing of many.

November, 1969

I serve with a small Christian church and find good stimulation in your articles as I prepare my messages for the congregation. May our Lord give you wisdom to send out His word and good encouragement to continue. I follow with interest and hope, through yours and other periodicals, what is happening among the churches of Christ. I pray for a great awakening of love and fervent evangelism. God bless you richly.

January, 1972

Much attention has been focused recently in *Integrity* on the question, "Where Shall We Worship?" May I offer a few observations?

To me, the question comes down to, "Can I afford to leave?" If I understand the prophetic literature, God's message to the prophet was, "I need you where you are, to speak my message to my people." It would have been the ultimate cop-out for them to give up on Israel or Judah, complaining that "nobody here cares about Jehovah." Similarly, for me to leave the Churches of Christ is to give up on the very people on whom I can have some of the greatest influence--I know them, their history, hang-ups and strengths. I know what they need, and can speak to them infinitely better as a fellow-member than from the perspective of an outsider. Sure we differ on many points--but does that warrant my leaving?

Granted, there are exceptional circumstances--an individual who has been disfellowshipped has, in essence, been given his walking papers--and if no other congregation (Church of Christ) will accept him, he has little choice but to leave. But until that occurs, I'm still left asking myself, "Can I afford to leave?"

April, 1973

Why did I read that !+!%&\*! article? I knew better. I'd had a pretty good day at work and was in a reasonably good frame of mind. In the mail was my copy of *Integrity* which I put on the bottom until I read the important stuff (like a flyer from Western Auto).

Having worked my way through the stack and having no viable alternative, I scanned the index. The word "homosexuality" sorta jumped up at me (probably from scanning pocket novels for the "good parts"). There was no way I could put the little book down now, so I read the full title: "God's Stand On Homosexuality."

It wasn't too late to salvage my peaceful (relatively) state of mind--I could just put the little book down, make me a scotch and water, and watch TV for a while--but I didn't.

It was as though a masochistic spirit had taken "aholt" of my senses. Knowing within reason what I was going to find, I turned to page 42 anyway, all the time feeling the anger and old memories rising inside. There it was again--that red flag. "God's stand" on something. Not "my understanding" or even "my understanding of God's view" or even "God's stand on such and such for *me*."

I try (usually unsuccessfully) not to pre-judge. My experience told me that that kind of a title could only denote a particular type of Church-of-Christ that I'd just as soon forget--the one who has the definitive answer to every question asked or unasked by religious people everywhere.

"You're being unkind," I admonished myself. "You could easily be wrong." "If that's true, why would it be in *Integrity*?" "Maybe this lady is trying to make a point about dogmatism." (I really talk to myself when I talk to myself.) All of this rationalization served to draw me into the article like a moth into a flame.

After playing Nave's Topical, she dismisses homosexuality-is-a-sickness with a wave of her hand.

She told me--surprise, surprise--that

God would forgive sicknesses and/or mental retardation, but forgot to include all the many proof texts for that position.

She also makes the strong statement that "homosexuality can be controlled." How does she know? Has God done that for her? What has God done for her? Has she ceased overeating? Losing her temper? Judging her brother?

Are there any possible mitigating circumstances in homosexuality? Does God judge the same those who choose it (as many of the Greeks did) and those who anguish over it? I wonder.

No, I'm not gay--it's one of the very few sins in this world of which I have not been guilty. But I wrestle unsuccessfully with other problems in my life that are just as bad--maybe worse. I am utterly dependent on the grace of God and, since that's true, can ill-afford to withhold it from *anyone* else.

November/December, 1973

The references to me in the August issue were such a vast improvement over some previous ones that I am deeply grateful. Since a merry heart is good medicine, and I got some laughs out of this, I guess it was good medicine in that respect!

My heart's desire is to stand for Christ and His truth regardless of whether it leads me to cross foe or friend. At least some things I have attacked (because of what I stand for) are surely dragons--atheism, evolutionism, communism, moral relativism, etc. A windmill is not a dragon, but charging it on horseback could be an unsettling experience! I shall continue to take Don Haymes in prayer before the throne of grace.

James D. Bales  
Searcy, Arkansas  
October, 1977

I just read Norman Park's "Restoration and Models of the Church" and think it is an important work. I tried to serve as an elder under the "authoritarian" model and am now trying to function under the more biblical model that you suggest--and can

assure you that there is no comparison between the two. Instead of constantly being concerned about "watch-dogging," I can now give attention to teaching and helping people. I don't even know how much money we have in our church "treasury." Our administrative committee worries about those matters.

It will take another generation, but we will turn these ugly and "programmed" attitudes around. People will no longer be intimidated by a threat of excommunication, because more and more Christians know they have been called into a relationship by God himself and not by men.

October, 1977

I want to express my deep appreciation to you and the rest of the brethren who produced this latest issue of *Integrity*...The rubber knife has been used much too long and I think it is time to do radical surgery upon our opinions with the scalpel God has provided. Jesus taught "If your eye offends you pluck it out." He said "If your hand offends you, cut it off." That leaves no room for protecting our false ideas of fellowship and unity, or hugging closer traditions which were outworn before they were adopted.

Why can we not do as Thomas Campbell suggested, reach out to our brethren "in all of the churches?" Certainly he was not talking about all the "churches of Christ" because there were none when he said it. I think it is time for those who love the Savior more than the sect to begin to demonstrate the fact. Association is the first rung in the strategy of the ladder climbing back toward unity. Too long have we absented ourselves from the meetings where our contribution can be used to the glory of God and the information of our friends. Thanks again. Keep writing. And keep prodding us with God's switchblade.

W. Carl Ketcherside  
St. Louis, MO  
January/February, 1982  
(Continued on back cover)

## Statement of Purpose

### From the Board of Directors

In order that our readers and writers may have a clear understanding of our objectives, and that we ourselves may maintain a clear perspective and a balanced journal which both reflects and inspires integrity, we issue the following statement.

We intend to provide a refined and respected literary medium for sharing the Good News of God in Christ to people of varying needs: to all who are searching for the abundant life; to believers who require reaffirmation of their faith and the reassurance of the Christian message; and to the corporate body of Christ whose mission is to witness his message to the world.

Since the Word of God is the ultimate criterion for determining the authenticity of everything the church is and does, our aim is to publish articles that are the result of keen exegetical study of the Scriptures and are at the same time interesting and understandable to our readers and related to their moral and spiritual needs.

In order that our efforts may be directed toward the mission of Christ, and not our own, we will encourage intensive inquiry into the origins of the Christian community and our religious heritage. This goal implies a recognition that dogma is often formulated as a defense against what is considered heresy, that the interpretation of Scripture is conditioned both historically and ideologically by the context in which it is articulated, and that multiple pressures are exerted on the conscience to remain loyal to the particular religious tradition one has embraced.

Since the Christian life essentially involves right relationships, we will make a concerted effort toward providing Biblical answers to questions of fellowship and unity.

We believe that all Christians must share the responsibility of determining the meaning of Jesus Christ in our lives and that the Spirit of Truth is not confined to any enclave of believers. Accordingly, we encourage response from all who recognize Jesus as Lord, irrespective of their convictions or affiliation.

We will continue to provide a forum in which sincere yet different points of view may be stated with Christian candor and competence. This policy necessarily entails publishing some conclusions at variance with our own, which will ordinarily be done without editorial judgment under the assumption that our readers are capable of evaluating diverse viewpoints for themselves.

We will provide an opportunity for the publication of at least limited amounts of reader response, negative as well as positive. This freedom of expression will be restricted only in terms of irrelevance, undue repetition, blatant crudeness, personal attack and shallow treatment of subject matter.

Our writers will speak with dignity, sincerity, and seriousness, honestly expressing the truth they have received from God, in words that are rational because they reflect His perspective and bear conviction to reasonable minds. Since a valid teaching ministry requires continual awareness of an adaption to the needs of a changing world, we expect to constantly adjust our emphasis so as to remain pertinent to the serious issues our readers face.

Finally, it is our unwavering aim to remain totally under God's guidance and dependent upon his grace.

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This original and continuing Statement of Purpose has been printed in February 1975, Jan./Feb. 1984, and Jan./Feb. 1989.