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From: bmouton@joplin.com

To: TerryJ707@aol.com

Subject: The New Covenant and Unity

Date: Sat, 12 Aug 2006 5:41 PM

Attachments:

THE_NEW_COVENANT_AND_UNITYThe_late_W.wpd (34K)

Dear Terry,

Just came from an acapella congregation where I was invited to speak to a men's group. Since WCK influenced my life by his insights into covenants I printed and passed out the following study.

THE NEW COVENANT AND UNITY

The late W. Carl Ketcherside was a remarkable combination of intellectual genius and commitment to Christ. He was a prodigious child advancing through the first four grades in a single year. He was so eager to learn that books borrowed from a traveling library were read twice in a single day. As an adult he continued to be a voracious reader and averaged reading a book a day for a period of seven years. Among his many accomplishments he was a preacher of considerable fame, and an internationally known editor who authored 34 books. His remarkable life and ministry were the subject of two Master Theses and three Doctoral Dissertations.

Carl became a Christian as a small boy and began preaching when only 12 years old. In 1951, at the prime of his life, he had a life changing encounter with Christ while preaching the Gospel in North Ireland. Among other things, his deepened relationship with Christ led him to champion the cause of Christian unity. One of his greatest contributions in this regard involves insight into the nature of the New Covenant. Some of these insights were printed in a book titled "The Death of the Custodian".

A brief summation of his thoughts points out that the Old Testament is not the first 39 books of the Bible, and the New Testament is not the last 27 books. While this shocking statement may seem like only an academic exercise, this critical insight can be a key that will help to unite estranged brethren all over the world.

It is hoped that this brief article will whet your appetite for further study. If these thoughts are true, as I believe they are, closer scrutiny will only enhance their impact upon your life. As you pursue this study, remember that the words "testament" and "covenant" are used interchangeably in the Bible. Here is why Carl concluded that the Old Testament is not the first 39 books of the Bible: ■ Not one verse of Scripture ever refers to the first 39 books of the Bible as a Testament.

- The Old Testament was made when God took His people by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt (Heb. 8:9). The Hebrew Scriptures, however, were written later.
- God made the Old Covenant with His people in Horeb (Deut. 5:2) or in the language of Galatians 4:25, "Mt. Sinai in Arabia". The first 39 books of the Bible, however, were written in Palestine, Babylon, and Persia.
- The Old Testament was broken by the time of Jeremiah (Jer. 31:32). Some books of the Hebrew Bible, however, were not yet written at this time.
- The Scriptures state explicitly that Moses received a covenant while he was 40 days upon Mt. Sinai. This covenant (also called the Ten Commandments) was written on two tablets of stone and placed in a receptacle called the "Ark of the Covenant" (Nu. 10:33). Once this covenant was completed God "added nothing more" - Deut. 5:22. (See also Exodus 34:27 - 28; Deuteronomy 4:11 - 13; 5:1 - 3; 9:11, etc.)
- While there are many covenants mentioned in the Bible, Carl concluded that the Old Covenant, (or Testament) as mentioned in Hebrew 8:6-13, was in fact the Ten Commandments and not the first 39 books of the Bible.

With a little reflection you can easily see how the Old Covenant created controversy. Just as men today debate the meaning of modern law, so also men have continually debated the meaning of God's Law. Take, for example, the commandment to remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy (Ex. 20:8). When a man gathered sticks on the Sabbath it was "not clear what should be done to him" (Nu. 15:34). Solving this controversy involved direct revelation from heaven. Since God has chosen not to intervene in every specific case, Bible scholars do not always agree. Consequently Sabbath regulations have been debated for over 3,000 years without ending the controversy. Similar controversy is associated with interpreting

every law, that's why court decisions are frequently "appealed" and often "reversed".

So God found fault with the Old Covenant and decided to write a new one (Heb. 8:8). The New Covenant, however, would be totally different from the old. Like new wine and old skins the two cannot be combined. The revolutionary New Covenant avoids controversy by being written inside of hearts and minds where others cannot read it (See Heb. 8:6 - 13).

Here is why Carl concluded that the New Testament is not the last 27 books of the Bible.

- Not once are the last 27 books of the Bible ever called the New Testament or Covenant.
- The Christian Scriptures were written with paper and ink (2 John 12, 3 John 13). The New Testament, however, is not written with ink but with the Spirit of the Living God (2 Cor. 3:3).
- The New Testament became a reality on the first Pentecost after our Lord's resurrection. Thousands were saved and became covenant people on that day, yet the New Testament Scriptures were not written for many years.
- The New Testament Scriptures came gradually as God guided inspired men into all truth. The canon of New Testament Scripture was not completed until near the end of the first century, and was not generally accepted until the fourth century. Many Christians died as martyrs before one word of the New Testament Scriptures was written.
- The Old Testament was written on tablets of stone. It was cold, rigid, inflexible, and without mercy. 3,000 died when the Old Testament was given. The New Testament is written upon the fleshly tables of the heart and mind (2 Cor. 3:3, Heb. 8:8 - 10). It was given by a merciful and faithful High Priest (Heb. 2:17). 3,000 were saved when the New Testament was given.
- The Old Testament was in the Holy of Holies in the temple. The New Testament transforms our bodies into temples of the Living God (1 Cor. 6:19). Just as the glory of God was associated with the Ten Commandments, so also we are to glorify God in our bodies.

THE SCRIPTURES ARE INSPIRED - BUT NOT THE COVENANT

We must state emphatically that "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Tim 3:16-17) Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. We must study the Scriptures to show ourselves approved unto God. The Bible is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. We must never forget the importance of the Holy Bible. At the same time, however, we must face the fact that the Bible is not the covenant. It never has been and never will be. Recognizing this fact does not keep God from guiding us by means of His Holy Word.

ISHMAEL AND ISAAC REPRESENT THE COVENANTS

Hagar, Sarah, and their children are allegories of these two covenants (see Gal. 4:21 - 31). Ishmael and the Old Covenant represented bondage. Isaac and the New Covenant represent freedom.

God predicted that Ishmael, the son of a slave, would be like a wild animal (Gen. 16:12). He would always be in the midst of controversy. His name "Ishmael" means "God hears". He was given that name because the Lord heard the afflictions of his mother (Gen. 16:11). The name is also appropriate, however, because he was constantly complaining to God about the inheritance he lost to his brother. Ishmael is like the Jewish people who perpetually debated the meaning of Scripture, and divided from those with whom they disagreed.

The name Isaac means "laughter". He and his mother represent freedom. While Ishmael was complaining, Isaac was laughing. The birth of Isaac involved a miracle for his mother was past the age of bearing. By human standards he should not have even been born, yet, not only was he born, he inherited everything that belonged to his father (Gen. 25:5). No wonder he was laughing! The joyful Isaac represents Christians who are known for loving one another, more than for argument and debate (John 13:35).

TEACHERS ARE KNOWN BY THEIR FRUITS

Since Ishmael and Isaac had the same father it is quite possible that they looked alike, and even wore the same type of clothing. They were, however, radically different. The word "radix", as you know, means "root". These two brothers had different roots. One was born after the flesh and the other after the Spirit. Their lives beautifully illustrate the contrast between a fleshly and a spiritual covenant.

While these two sons were not easy to distinguish by appearance, they were easily distinguished by their fruits. Ishmael produced the bitter fruit of controversy and division. Isaac produced the delicious fruit of laughter and love. Note this dichotomy between flesh and Spirit in the following passages. In Galatians 5:16 - 26 we read that the works of the flesh are obvious: hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy. By contrast the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. In James 3:13 - 18 we are told that earthly wisdom does not come down from heaven but is unspiritual and characterized by envy, selfish ambition, and disorder. The wisdom from above, however, is pure, peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. In Ephesians 4:31 we are admonished to get rid of all bitterness, anger, brawling, slander, and malice, and to be kind, compassionate, and forgiving. Jesus taught that religious teachers would be known by their fruits, and not by how they appear (Matt. 7:16). Unfortunately there are many religious teachers today who are living B.C. lives in an A.D. world.

Our change from the works of the flesh to the fruit of the Spirit does not happen by "conformation" but by "transformation" (Rom. 12:2). We are not conformed by the outward pressure of the Old Covenant, but we are transformed by the inward pressure of the new. When Jesus comes into our hearts we become a new creation. We received our physical life from an earthly seed planted by our earthly father, and we receive our spiritual life from a spiritual seed planted by our Heavenly Father. Christians are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of the incorruptible (1 Pet. 1:23). As Jesus said to Nicodemus - flesh gives birth to flesh and Spirit give birth to spirit (John 3:6). You cannot get spiritual life from a carnal seed. Every seed reproduces after its own kind. Our physical DNA causes us to be like our earthly father. Our Spiritual DNA causes us to be like our heavenly Father. Just as we have borne the earthly "image" of our earthly father, we can also bear the spiritual "image" of our heavenly Father (1 Cor. 15:49).

If God has written His laws in your minds and hearts the transformation of your life will be obvious. Here are some of the ways the Apostle John describes those who are "born again".

- "If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him" (1 Jn 2:29).
- "No-one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God" (1 Jn 3:9).
- "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God." (1 Jn 4:7).
- "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well" (1 Jn 5:1).
- "for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith" (1 Jn 5:4).
- "We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him" (1 Jn 5:18).

FRATERNITY IS BASED UPON PATERNITY

Carl liked to point out that he and his earthly brother disagreed all the time. This, however, did not mean that they were not brothers. Their "fraternity" depended upon their "paternity". They were brothers because they had the same father. This is why Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren. We are not as smart as Jesus, but we have a common Father (Heb. 2:11). When family members listen to the father, they invariably understand his words differently. It is not reasonable to expect a four year old and a fourteen year old to think alike about words from the father. Their failure to see things alike, however, does not mean that they are not brethren. Brethren invariably stand before the father with different intellectual abilities and different levels of maturity. These differences tend to disappear with maturity. Our goal, of course, is to attain full maturity in Christ. When this happens we will no longer be like infants tossed back and forth in our beliefs. Instead we will experience a new dimension of unity and knowledge of the Son of God (See Eph. 4:13 - 16). Remember that everyone who is born of God loves everyone else who is born of God (1 John 5:1).

THIS TRUTH ABOUT THE COVENANTS DOES NOT DIMINISH RESPECT FOR THE WORD OF GOD

It was my privilege to know Bro. Ketcherside for over thirty years. His insights into the covenants did

not diminish his respect for and obedience to the Word of God. He read it, believed it, and obeyed it. He was faithful until death. He even got rid of his home in suburbia and spent the last years of his life in a small inner city apartment ministering to the poor. To the day of his death he remained a sensitive and obedient child of our Heavenly Father.

The difference in the old Carl, and the new one, however, was quite dramatic. With an understanding smile he described his early days as those of a "piece maker". He was an avid debater and used the Sword of the Spirit to slash at those who did not understand the Bible in the same way that he did. In the last years of his life he was a "peace maker". He had the courage to never allow a denominational barrier to keep him from his brethren.

It is not by accident that Jesus connected "peacemakers" and "persecution" (See Matt. 5:9 - 10). When Carl shared his vision for unity with his wife Nell, she began to weep and said: "Carl, you are going to lose every friend you have on earth". Carl was willing to pay that price for he had at least One Friend who promised to never leave him or forsake him.

IT IS NOT THE BIBLE THAT UNITES BELIEVERS

Please consider:

- The Jerusalem church was united in Christ before one word of the New Testament Scriptures was even written.
- Christian brethren had unity even though the canon of Scripture was not completed until the end of the first century and not accepted until the fourth century.
- Even after the invention of the printing press the majority of believers in the world today still do not have a Bible and millions do not even have a written language. This, however, does not keep us from being united in Christ.
- The majority of people who have Bibles have not read them. If you do not believe this I challenge you to check at your own church and see how many have ever read the entire Bible.
- The majority of people who have read the whole Bible have not studied the whole Bible.
- Those who study the Bible are invariably guided by the preconceptions and prejudices of their own religious fellowship. Two brethren, for example, told me they had come to identically the same view of the millennium and the rapture simply by studying the Bible. This is quite remarkable, as the words "millennium" and "rapture" are not even found in the Bible.
- These and other considerations make it impossible for all of the brethren to understand all of the Bible in identically the same way.
- The Corinthians were divided because their unity was in men like Paul, Apollos, and Cephas. The only true foundation for Christian unity is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11).

Paul faced death with confidence because he knew "Whom" he had believed (1Tim. 1:12). Our faith is "personal" not "propositional". "Whom" we believe is far more important than "what" we believe. We can be wrong about a lot of things as long as we are right about Jesus. If we are wrong about Jesus it doesn't matter what else we are right about!

THIS TRUTH CAN IMPACT YOUR LIFE AND MINISTRY

Something is obviously wrong! Jesus prayed that we would be "one" but we are not (Jn. 17:21). There are literally hundreds of divisions in the Body of Christ. Incredibly, it seems that those who study the Bible the most are often the most divided.

As you know, heaven and earth will pass away but the Bible will not! Its message is eternally the same. Our "understanding" of the Bible, however, does change. As we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ we arrive at new insights and understanding. Peter, for example, once thought it was wrong for the Christ to suffer (Matt. 16:20 - 22). Later he realized that suffering is an integral part of God's plan for all believers (1 Pet. 4:12 - 16). Most of us have also changed our minds on some Bible verse or teaching and Carl reminds us that it isn't necessary to change churches every time we learn something new.

If you view the New Testament Scriptures as a legal document, or covenant, then the slightest perceived departure from that covenant can become grounds for separation. Such unfortunate divisions are happening every day. Remarkably, the devil often divides us over the very things that should bring us together. For example, baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Holy Spirit, and the second coming of Christ should be cause for celebration. Instead these doctrines have become the subject of bitter debate and

malignant division.

Once we gain new insight and understanding into some Bible doctrine, we often feel compelled to separate from others and start the "true church". Carl would remind all who feel that way should remember the church in Thyatira. That church tolerated a "Jezebel" who mislead God's servants into sexual immorality and sin. Those at Thyatira, however, who did believe her lies did not have to leave. Jesus told them merely to "hold on to what you have until I come" (Rev. 2:25).

The New Testament Scriptures are not the New Covenant. They never have been, and they never will be. Legal documents invariably have to be interpreted and enforced. There is no mechanism in the church of our Lord Jesus for establishing "true interpretations" and "ultimate understandings" of the Bible. Every child of God has a right to "find" meaning in the Word of God. No child of God has a right to "give" it meaning.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." (Jude 1:24-25 KJV)

P.S. Found a program from the Cottage Grove Men's Camp in Aug. 1960. It was one of several where Carl was the featured speaker. Will send you a copy if you are interested.

In Christ,
Boyce

July 17, 1958
Oakland, Ill.

Dear Bro. Boyce;

Our prayers and thanksgivings are constantly going up before our God in behalf of you and your family, remembering without ceasing your spirit of zeal and consecration in the work of the Master. May you abound more and more in my prayer.

I have something of importance to write you and hope you will consider it and join the effort with us. Just yesterday Stan and I got back from Hartford, Ill. where we met with Kingsley, Carl Ketcherside, and 2 elders from Hartford. whereas we were all disturbed over the matter of the "christian church brotherhood" not waking up to the dangers of the "pastor system" we met to see what could be done in the way of causing a big movement among the "preachers" of the christian churches and the students of the colleges. We discussed the matter at length taking up several hours of the day. It was decided finally that we would gather together all the names of the preachers which we could think of in the immediate states which would be willing to at least read a pamphlet we send them. We decided it would be well to send a personal letter with the pamphlet to. The pamphlet to which I refer is one that "bible talk" put out. If you subscribe to "Bible talk" and will check in your files for vol. 6 no. 8 (may, 1958) you will find the pamphlet to which we refer. This issue of the paper has been put out as is yet without the title or editor or author. It merely appears to be a pamphlet without any church, denomination, or religious organization attached to it. It is dealing with a study of the "modern-day pastor system". We feel it pretty well covers the issue in a worthy manner and feel it will open the eyes of many if we can get them to read it. What we want to do then is get several fellows to make up a list of names of preachers, elders, professors, etc. which they think would listen to them if they wrote them a letter and sent the pamphlet; not for the purpose of "straightening them out" but to ask their help in determining the truth of the matter. In making such a request as this they will probably reply. So I am writing the different fellows and asking them to send me a list of the names by the first part of next month and I will go through the names and weed out all the duplicates. If you do not have the addresses of some of them put a star by them and I will see about getting them. The fellows we hope to have participating in this are: Kingsley, myself, Jim, Clarence, Given, and You (possibly also Gene Marvin and Dave Armstrong) I was also wondering about Bob Garvery? Now, we intend to meet August 19 at Lincoln and pass these lists back out and add any additional ones we might have thought up and get all organized. However if you can't make it to Lincoln don't worry we will send you the list and the pamphlets too (by the way, if you can help any on purchasing the pamphlets send the dough to us). Now, realizing that it will be a big job to write all these fellows personally Stan and I have volunteered to memio off any and all letters which the fellows might want done. Possibly many of the letters would be duplicates anyhow and then if you choose to write some personally you could do so. That is your own decision. If you can possibly make it be at Lincoln August 19 for we plan to meet at 9:00 SHARP! at 553 4th street (church of Christ meeting house) to go over all this! We will have the pamphlets then and will give them out (we will mail those who are not there). Bro. Carl and 2 elders of the Hartford church plan to be there and hope to meet you fellows so try your level best to make it! Jim and Clarence I know will be there and I think Given will. I also know Kingsley will! I hope and pray you can make it! We'll find you room and board if you want to stay all night! Now if you do not have one of the pamphlets don't worry I'm sending one to all the fellows just as soon as they get in: they are ordered now: when you get it read it through and see if you could go through with our plan and then write me by the first of August with a list of names if at all possible!

Well, that about covers that subject. If you have any suggestions or questions about it send them.

We also discussed in our meeting something which I had written Carl about. That of having a tent-meeting in Oakland for the purpose of presenting the truth and letting it have it's own course. In other words we are not going to do it for the intentions of starting a church or of stopping the churches that now are but merely to present the word of truth and let the seed grow into what it may. We discussed it to be expedient to have several speakers during the meeting. So we have lined up: Carl Ketcherside; Kingsley Downing; ~~###~~ Leroy Garrett; several elders and other evangelists which you probably don't know and we hope to have Given Blakely. We would like very much to have you and Jim if you can make it. The meeting will be held the last 2 weeks in Sept. It will be a tent-meeting. We will provide food and lodging for the speakers and pay there expenses of traveling. If you can at all possible make it sometime during the meeting for a night or two write and tell me and I'll send you a list of the general subjects and ~~###~~ dates and you can choose. Don't tarry however! If you feel you would rather not come unless you could speak longer come up anyhow and we'll arrange a meeting in one of the christian churches or churches of Christ! I'm sure we can! Think it over and reply when you can! It is possible you would get up here and even like it so much you would stay! They are wanting to put some evangelist in East St. Louis where there is a great field. Anyhow write and tell me what you think!

Our work of preparating is steadily increasing! We are more or less putting to practice what Bro. Carl affirmed in his last paper on "Fellowship". Establishing fellowship and agreement is the result! We visit and fellowship with the churches and plead for unity. The radio ~~work~~ work is fairly effect but I think I will probably go off the air the end of this month because I am not getting enough response. We are holding cottage meetings every week which may very well prove out to be very effective! We request your prayers in all this!

Concerning the meeting in Lincoln: Bro. Carl wants very much to meet you and the others so do your level best to be there. After our discussion and fellowship at the meeting house we shall adjourn to scatter to preach and you can guess yourself where? Yea, the college! It ~~is~~ is of course the anual youth rally and many students will be there and we can make our lists somewhat shorter by seeing the students personally and talking to them and giving them the pamphlets! Oh yes, I did tell Bro. Mills that I would get off the campus but I did not say HOW LONG I WOULD STAY OFF! Tell me personall Boyce: Do you think it would be wrong for me to go on the campus?

We wish you all the good fortune in the kingdom that is possible for one in your condition and pray that we shall meet face to face very soon that we might enjoy fellowship of Christian nature.

Bob Clapp

1ST Man
who used
instruments to
invite Carl to
speak

Prayerfully Rufus,
Bob &
Family

July 17, 1958
Oakland, Ill.

Dear Bro. Boyce;¹

Our prayers and thanksgivings are constantly going up before our God in behalf of you and your family, remembering without ceasing your spirit of zeal and consecration in the work of the Master. May you abound more and more is my prayer.

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¹ Boyce Mouton (1936 -).

² Kingsley Dowling, son of Enos Dowling. Kingsley, "was a 'hellian' who did drugs, broke his father's heart, and was covered with tattoos. Kingsley had one of those wonderful conversions that placed him in Bible College and he was a powerful preacher of the Gospel." E-mail from Boyce Mouton on 7 July 2006.

³ William Carl Ketcherside (1908-1989), editor of *Mission Messenger* in 1958.

⁴ *Bible Talk* was a monthly periodical (1952-1958) edited by Leroy James Garrett (1918 -). *Bible Talk* strongly opposed institutionalism and professionalism including the located preacher.

⁵ Jim Ranchino, a top student and outstanding athlete at Lincoln Bible Institute, later a professor at Arkadelphia.

⁶ Clarence Taylor, a student at Lincoln Bible Institute.

⁷ Given O. Blakely, was "kicked out" of Lincoln Bible Institute.

⁸ Gene Marvin was a student at Lincoln Bible Institute.

⁹ Bob Garvey was student at Lincoln Bible Institute. While attending Lincoln he lived in Mt. Pulaski (about 10 miles from Lincoln) and Boyce Mouton would pick him up and drive him to school.

these lists back out and add any additional ones we might have thought up and get all organized. However if you can't make it to Lincoln don't worry we will send you the list and the pamphlets too (by the way, if you can help any on purchasing the pamphlets send the dough to us). Now, realizing that it will be a big job to write all these fellows personally Stan¹¹ and I have volunteered to memio¹² off any and all letters which the fellows might want done. Possibly many of the letters would be duplicates anyhow and then if you choose to write some personally you could do so. That is your own decision. If you can possibly make it be at Lincoln August 19 for we plan to meet at 9:00 SHARP! At 553 4th street (church of Christ meeting house) to go over all this! We will have the pamphlets then and will give them out (we will mail those who are not there). Bro. Carl and 2 elders of the Hartford church plan to be there and hope to meet you fellows so try your level best to make it! Jim and Clarence I know will be there and I think Given will. I also know Kingsley will! I hope and pray you can make it! We'll find you room and board if you want to stay all night! Now if you do not have one of the pamphlets don't worry I'm sending one to all the fellows just as soon as they get in: the yare ordered now: when you get it read it through and see if you could go through with our plan and then write me by the first of August with a list of names if at all possible! Well, that about covers that subject. If you have any suggestions or questions about it send them.

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¹⁰ Lincoln, Illinois

¹¹ Stan Clapp, brother of Bob Clapp.

¹² Usually abbreviated mimeo, short for mimeograph (also known as a stencil duplicator). An obsolete printing machine that was used for short printing runs. It was cheaper than commercial printing. The invention of xerography led to the obsolescence of the mimeograph machine.

¹³ Oakland, Illinois.

¹⁴ Leroy James Garrett (1918-); editor of *Bible Talk* in 1958.

¹⁵ "Thoughts on Fellowship," *Mission Messenger*, Vol. 20, No. 7 (July, 1958): 1.

The radio work is fairly effect[ive] but I think I will probably go off the air the end of this month because I am not getting enough response. We are holding cottage meeting every week which may very well prove out to be very effective! We request your prayers in all this!

Concerning the meeting at Lincoln: Bro. Carl wants very much to meet you and the others so do your level best to be there. After our discussion and fellowship at the meeting house we shall all adjourn to scatter to preach and you can guess where? Yea, the college!¹⁶ It is, of course, the annual youth rally and many students will be there and we can make our lists somewhat shorter by seeing the students personally and talking to them and giving them the pamphlets! Oh yes, I did tell Bro. Mills that I would get off the campus but I did not say HOW LONG I WOULD STAY OFF! Tell me personally Boyce: Do you think it would be wrong for me to go on the campus?

We wish you all the good fortune in the kingdom that is possible for one in your condition and pray that we shall meet face to face very soon that we might enjoy fellowship of Christian nature.

/s/ Prayerfully Preparing;
Bob¹⁷ & Family

¹⁶ Lincoln Bible Institute, today known as Lincoln Christian College and Seminary located in Lincoln, Illinois.

¹⁷ Robert "Bob" Daniel Clapp (1936-). According to Boyce Mouton, Bob Clapp was the "1st man who used instrument to invite Carl [Ketcherside] to speak." Of the Clapp brothers Carl Ketcherside wrote, "We think you'd like to read "The Enlightener" published by Bob and Stan Clapp. Just write to either of them at Oakland (Ill.) and ask for a copy." *Mission Messenger*, Vol. 20, No. 8 (August, 1958):15.

MISSION MESSENGER

W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR

2360 GARDNER DRIVE

ST. LOUIS 21, MO.

April 8, 1959

Dear Boyce:

Thank you so much for your very kind letter. Nell will place the names on the list to receive the paper and we sincerely trust that those who read will be benefitted by doing so. There remains ahead of us this year some very straight talking (I hope it will be based upon straight thinking), and I am not sure just what the outcome will be with many of the readers.

We have been having some interesting contacts and discussions with brethren of both instrumental and non-instrumental groups up at Springfield, Illinois. The non-instrumental preachers have done their best to kill it, and to turn it into a wrangle. Most of the opposition has been directed against me, however, but we have managed to hold an even keel so far, and the prospects look good for the future. There are many symptoms to indicate that all over the land brethren are beginning to think very seriously, and that fact alone is encouraging.

I am pleased that John Lyttle is among the fellowship of the concerned. But I deplore the constant harrassment of spirit which many of you must suffer by virtue of the condition into which we have come through having missed the tenor of the restoration movement. I know that it must be a trial of the spirit to seek to work out conditions in a place like Oswego, and often one is torn between conflicting emotions.

I should be pleased indeed to share in the program next year if the invitation can be conscientiously given. I think that we should miss no opportunity to maintain the contacts we have made with each other, for our mutual strength and good. Give my love to all of the folk around there that I have met and send in names when you wish. Yours for His sake "whom having not seen we love."

Carl

MISSION MESSENGER

W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
2360 GARDNER DRIVE
ST. LOUIS 21, MO.

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/s/ Carl

¹ Boyce Mouton (1936 -).

² John S. Lyttle (1926-1993) preached for many years for the Christian Church in Diamond, Missouri. At the time of his death he was described the Pastor of the whole town of Sullivan, Indiana."

³ Oswego, Kansas. Located about 40 miles west of Joplin, Missouri. Boyce Mouton ministered to a small Christian Church in Oswego and resided there in 1959.

⁴ Apparently Boyce Mouton had invited Carl to speak at Oswego in 1959 but it did not work out. By the following year Mouton had moved to San Jose, California.

May '60

MISSION MESSENGER

W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR

2360 GARDNER DRIVE

ST. LOUIS 21, MO.

Dear Boyce:

Thank you for your good letter and also for the program included therein. It sounds as if it must have been a very interesting occasion indeed and I wish that I might have been there to have heard the various talks that were delivered. I have just arrived back in the city from a little rural congregation down in the Bootheal area. We had three good sessions. The marks and scars of battles in other days still remain and two miles from where I labored there was a Christian Church, whose members once were united in heart and work with the fathers of those who meet where I was. I went among both groups and found a cordial reception amongst those I visited.

We have incorporated the names in our list that you fixed up for us in your letter, and we hope the brethren will be profited by reading the paper. There are indeed great days ahead for us if we can maintain our spiritual equilibrium and if those who are now re-investigating their traditional positions do not go off half-cocked as so often has happened in the past.

I note the footnote that you have appended to the effect that Jim was there with you. Greetings to him and to all others there who love the Lord Jesus in purity and with hope. Thank you so much for bringing us into contact with more of the brethren. I'm distressed to hear of the departure of Brother Yoder. With love to you and yours I am, as always

Yours and HIS,

Carl

MISSION MESSENGER

2360 GARDNER DR. • ST. LOUIS 36, MISSOURI • UNDERHILL 8-3248

W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR

Feb. 13, 1961

Dear Bayce:

I'm not sure about the men's meeting at Cottage Grove, as I've received no confirmation from Dean since writing him last. I hope it works out.

I do hope we can meet and talk about implementation of the Lord's work by all of His priests and servants, rather than a selected few shipped off elsewhere and trained out from under the supervision of the bishops.

We need to do a great deal of practical application of our theory, I think! I'm trocking all of the time and

am at Champaign-Urbana,
Illinois now in a class which
will have several U. of I. students
in it! We'll also have some of
the instrument brethren with
us.

Have you read my book "Con-
cerning Christian Colleges" in
which I answer A. G. Hobbs's
thesis? It may not serve
your need but if you'd care
to read it I'll loan you a
copy. The supply for sale
was long since exhausted.
Write me a letter at home and
I'll send you a copy on loan
when I get back. Love to
you as always,

Carl

MISSION MESSENGER
2360 GARDNER DR. • ST. LOUIS 36, MISSOURI • UNDERHILL 8-3248

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I do hope we can meet and talk about implementation of the Lord's work by all of His priests and servants, rather than a selected few shipped off elsewhere and trained out from under the supervision of the bishops.

We need to do a great deal of practical application of our theory, I think! I'm traveling all of the time and am at Champaign-Urbana, Illinois now in a class which will have several U. of I. students in it! We'll also have some of the instrument brethren with us.

Have you read my book "Concerning Christian Colleges"⁴ in which I answer A. G. Hobb's⁵ thesis? It may not serve you need but if you'd care to read it I'll loan you a copy. The supply for sale was long since exhausted. I'll send you a copy on loan when I get back. Love to you as always,

/s/ Carl

¹ Written to Boyce Mouton (1936-).

² See "Oregon Meetings," *Mission Messenger* 23 (May 1961): 14. "W. Carl Ketcherside will speak on the nights of August 23, 24, 25 at Gove Christian Service Camp, Cottage Grove, Oregon. The general theme of the four day meeting will be 'In Times Like These.' The subject assigned to the editor will be 'Christian Fellowship.' There will be forums conducted on Thursday and Friday afternoons presided over by Conley Silsby, professor at Puget Sound College of the Bible, and these will provide opportunity for questions directed to the speakers who participate." Bob Beech, a member of the Cottage Grove Church, who was a wealthy lumber man, had donated land for a Christian camp just outside of Cottage Grove.

³ Dean Pence, Minister of the Church of Christ (Instrumental) in Cottage Gove, Oregon.

⁴ W. Carl Ketcherside, *Concerning Christian College, A reply to an article by A. G. Hobbs, Jr., entitled "Concerning Colleges," and published in "Christian Worker," Jan. 25, 1945*, (St. Louis: Mission Messenger, circa 1953).

⁵ A. G. Hobbs, Jr. (1909-1991).

in flight



EASTERN AIR LINES

March 14, 1961

Dear Boyce:

I left Saint Louis yesterday morning for Winchester, Kentucky where I spoke at a lectureship yesterday afternoon and last night. There were several hundred present, representing 15 states and nations - among them some 40 or more preachers. I allowed them to question me after it was over and the queries were interesting indeed. Tomorrow night I shall be at the Missouri Christian Lectureship at Moberly.

I am sending you on loan the copy of my review of an article on the college question and you may return it after you have read it, if you will, please! I am not sure that it will contribute a great deal to your thinking but am happy to have you see it for what it may be worth.

I was not privileged to stay at the Kentucky lectureship until Leroy arrived. He speaks there on Thursday afternoon but is getting in tomorrow with Dale Jorgenson, Head of the Music Dept. at Bethany. He will direct a large composite chorus in a rendition of a number by Handel on Thursday night. Of course it is not true that Leroy denies miracles - as a matter of fact that is just sheer poppycock! He and I agree that the power of God is operative on three levels - natural, providential and miraculous! We agree that in the second he always operates through the first and in the third he operates independent of the first!

I suspect that Brother Lynch - true to his name - will hang himself if he talks long enough. Fortunately, one is not obligated to believe all of the non-instrument preachers in order to demonstrate agape and compassion for them. They are just a little reckless with their own statements as they are with some the Lord made. It has been my experience that men who twist God's word to justify themselves can hardly be trusted to be as forthright with their own as they ought to be!

I am glad that you are to be with Dale in the Kansas meeting as I am sure that it will be helpful to you both to be together. And I do hope that you will continue praying for me and for my feeble attempts. God is especially good in opening up doors but we are not so good at going through them sometimes. May His grace sustain you in all things is our prayer.

Yours and HIS,

Car

MISSION MESSENGER

2360 GARDNER DR. • ST. LOUIS 36, MISSOURI • UNDERHILL 8-3248

W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR

September 13, 1961

Dear Boyce:

I deeply appreciate your letter which came today and I have been wondering whether we may be pushing things too rapidly. Obviously I am always happy to do what I can but I think that we need to give the Holy Spirit time to work in a lot of areas, and proceed with a reasonable degree of reserve and caution. I am perfectly willing to postpone the arrangement for there until later and until it becomes more apparent what we are trying to do, so that brethren will lose their natural reluctance and fears.

I still anticipate that the meeting at Lakewood may accomplish a great deal in opening up doors for study and fellowship. I may be expecting too much and we may have our sights set too high, but I feel that we shall see the beginning of a re-evaluation of our present position among a lot of the groups in southern California. That is why I am so pleased that a number of brethren are planning to attend including several from San Jose.

Do continue to pray for us as we shall for you and may the grace of God be with you all in all things is our prayer. I am finding a considerable amount of interest in the research on restoration.

As ever,

Carl

MISSION MESSENGER

2360 GARDNER DR. • ST. LOUIS 36, MISSOURI • UNDERHILL 8-3248

W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR November 15, 1961

My dear brother in HIM:

You may or may not have heard that I have been invited to return to the Cottage Grove Mens Meet next year, but I am going to try and work it in as Dean feels there is a rather tremendous uplift given to the study and research of unity among the believers.

Too, we are starting to work on another meeting in the Los Angeles area in a new location and it appears that before too long we shall have another announcement to make relative to it for I see no reason why it should not work out.

I shall try to remember to express myself a little more fully with regard to that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.

Nell has checked the stencil for Dallas Meserve and it shows 2835 Brierfield, Redwood City, and his paper should be coming through by now. If not tell him to write us a card and we will try once more.

I have been deeply gratified by the number of brethren who are listening to the tapes and I trust that by this means they may carry their messages to those who could not be with us personally.

We are sending the paper for one year to

both Wayne Bigelow and Jim Phillips. There will be no charge for this at all, for we are glad to place them on the list.

We have also included you on the list for 25 copies each month for one year, the price of which will be \$10.00 - when you remit it just make a note "for 25 copies each month."

Continue to pray for us as we do for you and I shall look forward to seeing you again. I am as always

Yours and HIS,

Carl

"We are your servants for Jesus' sake"

Oak Hill Chapel

A MEETING PLACE FOR CHRISTIANS

4068 PARKER AVE. (AT OAK HILL)

ST. LOUIS 16, MISSOURI

January 20, 1962

Dear Boyce:

Thank you for your good letter and I suggest that the thing to do is to drop a blind note in the paper and if a doctor answers, to have him get in touch with Brother Bigelow through your kindness. I would have such a prospect write to you and you could put him in touch with Wayne. That would protect Wayne to a great extent.

I trust that you can keep that plane in flying condition because it is my hope to see you at the Men's Camp at Cottage Grove, and also the Fellowship Rally at Rosemead. I will excuse you from coming to the men's camp at Outlook, Saskatchewan, and the Unity Concourse at Denver, although I would be delighted if you could make both. These and other meetings of kindred nature will probably do a lot of good.

I am looking forward to seeing Don DeWalt and Seth Wilson, with a host of others, at the Third Consultation on Internal Unity of the Christian Churches, at Tulsa. I have been selected as the Bible Lecturer for the meetings, which will make it possible to meet DeGroot and a lot of the Disciple men as well. I hope that it does not turn out to be a Confab on Infernal Unity!

I have been busier than I should be, I think, and that militates against getting about to places like Ozark Bible School which I should like to visit. However, with the literary dagger you have pierced my conscience anew and I shall endeavor to see the fellows when I can.

We are seeing some tremendous gains I think in the feeling toward fellowship in Christ Jesus in this area. Our sector is somewhat different than many others. In some the proper attitude seems to be manifested by the instrumental brethren and the others are reluctant. Here we find that the opposite is true. Our brethren have been taught and instructed on the subject and the other brethren tend to shy away and be fearful. They still feel that we have an ulterior motive; and while regarding themselves as prophets of God like Jonah, they consider us as whales ready to swallow them up and thus see that they do not make it to Nineveh.

But there are strides forward being taken by some and this bodes good for the future. I have just learned that I am to speak each night and morning at Cottage Grove, and be on the question panel, so I shall look forward to an interesting occasion. I now have three articles in for "The Pattern" and Larry Jonas and myself are engaged in a very interesting correspondence dealing with attitudes in the accomplishment of our objectives. Love to all out there from us who are here.

Yours and HIS,

Case

2360 Gardner Drive
Saint Louis 36, Missouri

"We are your servants for Jesus' sake"

Oak Hill Chapel

A MEETING PLACE FOR CHRISTIANS
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¹ This letter was written to Boyce Mouton (1936 -).

² Dr. Wayne Bigelow practiced medicine in Hughson, California and was seeking a Christian physician to partner with him.

³ W. Carl Ketcherside will "speak twice daily at the Grove Men's Meet, Cottage Grove, Oregon, August 22-24." "Messenger Service," *Mission Messenger*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (March 1962): 16.

⁴ "At the invitation of the elders of the Rosemead Church of Christ, 8705 East Valley Boulevard, Rosemead, California, W. Carl Ketcherside will conduct a fellowship rally, September 17-21. In addition to the speeches each night arrangements will be made for question sessions in which the presentation of the speaker will be submitted to full interrogation from the audience. Although the congregation uses instrumental music, in deference to the consciences of those opposed, its use will be suspended during these meetings that all may come and participate in the studies." "California Meeting," *Mission Messenger*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (February, 1962): 14.

⁵ "W. Carl Ketcherside is scheduled to be one of the teachers at the Men's Camp, Outlook, Saskatchewan, Canada, July 26-29." "Messenger Service," *Mission Messenger*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (March 1962): 16.

⁶ "The congregation meeting at 46th and Miller Sts., Wheat Ridge, Colorado, announces an intensive Bible study to be held in Denver, July 1-7. The purpose of the sessions will be to explore the question of fellowship with a view to achieving unity." "Concourse Toward Unity," *Mission Messenger*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (February 1962): 14.

⁷ At age 17 Don DeWelt (1919-1990) was converted by Archie James Word (1901-1988) and became a leading evangelist, teacher and publisher amongst the independent Christian Churches.

⁸ Seth Wilson (1914-2006) is described by Boyce Mouton as "a brilliant young skeptic who came to Christ at about 19. He graduated from the Cincinnati Bible Seminary and became the Dean of the Ozark Christian College when they were located in Bentonville, Ark., many years ago. He was the Academic Dean for more than 50 years." Email from Boyce Mouton to Terry Gardner dated 15 August 2007.

meet DeGroot⁹ and a lot of the Disciple men as well. I hope that it does not turn out to be a Confab on Infernal Unity!

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Yours and HIS,
/s/ Carl¹¹

2360 Gardner Drive
Saint Louis 36, Missouri

⁹ Alfred T. DeGroot (1903-1992), a preacher, teacher and historian amongst the Disciples of Christ.

¹⁰ Ozark Bible College was founded in Bentonville, Arkansas in 1942. It moved to Joplin, Missouri in October of 1944. The name of the school was eventually changed to Ozark Christian College.

¹¹ This letter was written by William Carl Ketcherside (1908-1989).

Honor to Whom Honor is Due. . .



"This Is Your Life"



Seth Wilson

ON
FEBRUARY
22

AT P&T CONVENTION

Seth Wilson Academic Dean, Ozark Bible College, 1942-79
Academic Dean Emeritus, 1979 to present
Faculty member, 1942 to present

Seth Wilson has been with Ozark Bible College since its beginning forty-two years ago in Bentonville, Arkansas. The "This is your Life" on Wednesday evening, February 22, will highlight his life and the life of Ozark Bible College.

Many of his friends from the past and many OBC faculty, staff and alumni from over the years will share in the evening. This will be a special night in the history of Ozark Bible College. We invite you to attend.

March '62

MISSION MESSENGER
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

Dear Boyce:

I have just arrived home from Morrison, Illinois. It is a tragic picture of an ever-recurring scene. The brethren in the past have fought each other with such bitterness and with a "They shall not pass" philosophy until they finally got down to two women. Still they were the "loyal church" and the faithful believers in other groups in the little city were headed for eternal condemnation on a downhill slide. Now the congregation is slowly building back. It was a pleasure to me to share with them and with the young man who preaches for the only "Brethren in Christ" congregation west of the Indiana border, and with the Mennonite preacher who is freely confessing that they have had it and are on their way out.

I am going this week to Greenville College which is of Free Methodist leanings, although they are still "Learning to Lean." I am to become entangled in the great current debate over nuclear arms. It will be an interesting phenomenon. I am to preach for the congregation while I am there for the three nights.

I still recall with a great deal of fervent delight the time I spent with the saints at Carl Junction, but I have not as yet gained consensus of my mind or conscience to deliver the series of lectures. I wrote to Dennis immediately upon my arrival home but have not heard from him yet. I may not because his name may not be an expression of his nature. God be with you and with all of yours. May His grace sustain you. I am delighted to be both yours and HIS,

Carl

"We are your servants for Jesus' sake"

Oak Hill Chapel

A MEETING PLACE FOR CHRISTIANS

4058 PARKER AVE. (AT OAK HILL)

ST. LOUIS 16, MISSOURI

May 14, 1962

Dear Boyce:

Alexander Campbell used to carry a column of notes in Millennial Harbinger under the heading "Progress of Reform" and I am sure that your letter comes under that heading. We are getting ready to start a class here which will be attended by a group of preaching brethren from the various segments and in which we will study my views about the one church, covenantal relationship, and fellowship. I think I shall call it a "reform school." Most of us who will attend have been delinquents - in our thinking!

I am glad that you mentioned your visit to the tribal "happy hunting ground" which has been taken over by modern redskins (after having been in the sun a few days) - the Kiamichis. I am sure that the original inhabitants would be surprised to learn that their war whoops have been supplanted by "Amen's" and instead of scalping Cherokees and Creeks, the more modern tribes are after the hair of the Commies! I am sure that the sword of the Spirit is a much more appropriate weapon than the war club and scalping knife.

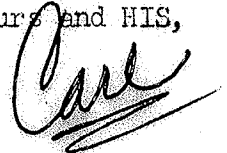
I should like to meet Clarence Greenleaf a great deal, having heard much about him and his work in Grundy. It sort of thrills me that some of the brethren think I am both too narrow and too broad. That is merely another way of saying that I do not fit into any of the categories which have been devised in the past, and that the Procrustean iron bested on the highway of factionalism has not as yet been able to reduce me or lengthen me to the approved partisan stature. When the day comes that the brethren can fit me into some accredited pattern and I do not stick out or bulge beyond it in any place, nor fall short of the "average length" I shall be worried sick for then I will know to what party I owe my allegiance.

Contrary to the general way of thinking, one is safe so long as those in each faction are kept wondering - none can claim him, yet they cannot assign him to any of the others. They are always on tiptoe, wanting him, yet fearful of having him! I deal with this problem under the heading "How Far is Too Far?" in the July issue. I am not writing it to arouse controversy. I simply recognize that it will do so when I write it! But all of this is good and encouraging to me. So long as I can keep myself free from party alliances and entanglements my work is safe - it is difficult to keep oneself from being captured by well-meaning brethren. Facetiously a group offered me the presidency of a Bible College recently, but I declined it on the ground that if I took it I would have no place to go and study the Bible.

I am thrilled with the prospect in the Bay area and also with the general tone of the situation in Oregon. I am getting ready to move into a new format of writing in September and October issues. I now have many contacts with the "Disciples" and I must bring to bear my own convictions on the authority, the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred scriptures. Watch for things to start popping this autumn! Love to you always in all things.

2369 Gardner Drive, Saint Louis 36, Mo.

Yours and HIS,



"We are your servants for Jesus' sake"

Oak Hill Chapel

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4068 PARKER AVE. (AT OAK HILL)
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¹ Alexander Campbell (1788-1866) 19th Century reformer. Leader in thought that led to the Disciples of Christ, Christian Church and Churches of Christ.

² *Millennial Harbinger* (1830-1870). Alexander Campbell's religious periodical which was issued monthly from Bethany, Virginia, later West Virginia.

³ "Many years ago there was an evangelist with the Disciples of Christ named A.B. McReynolds. He wore a white coat and tails and was known to promote his meetings with outrageous ideas that would draw a crowd. Due to an illness, I am told, he quit traveling and moved to S. E. Oklahoma in the Kiamichi Mountains. He bought 1,000 acres for a dollar an acre or so and started a ranch. His brand was "MX3" which stood for Malachi 3:10. He bragged that he would give \$1,000 to anyone who ever heard him preach without mentioning tithing. Now, instead of a white coat and tails, he wore boots, jeans, and a 10 gallon hat. He also purchased 40 acres at a place called Honobia - pronounced ho-nub-e. I am told it is an Indian word meaning "End of the Road" This place he called "Christ's 40 acres". He began inviting people to come there to learn how to make their lives count more for Christ. Originally the roads were so bad that people were invariably losing mufflers, etc. Over the years, however, the roads were improved and at its peak was said to draw 10,000. There were no ties, and no women allowed." Email to Terry Gardner from Boyce Mouton dated 3 July 2006.

⁴ "Clarence Greenleaf (1915-2004) was one of the regular speakers [at Honobia]. He graduated from a Christian College - I think it was the Cinn. Bible Seminary - and settled in an obscure valley in VA. at a little town called Grundy. He never left. He was unique in a number of ways. For example, he thought that a man of God should not own anything. I am told he never owned a car, house, or anything of that nature. Of course, he never went hungry because the brethren there supplied his every need. He started the Grundy Bible Institute. No high school diploma was required and they spent 2 years studying the book of Acts. The focus was not to train preachers, but to train all the children of God. Preachers, he said would rise to the surface like cream on milk. I think the Grundy Church grew to 6 or 800 and started 18 - 20 churches in the area. Those trained in the Institute are now scattered throughout the world. One other interesting thing - Clarence expected all the elders to be present at every service. To insure their presence he had their names on a board and each elder had a light bulb with his name. When he showed up for

MISSION MESSENGER

2360 GARDNER DR. • ST. LOUIS 36, MISSOURI • UNDERHILL 8-3248

May 4, 1963

W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR

Dear Boyce:

Thanks for the letter and enclosure. This is the third copy of the article by Mel Byers and I have taken time to read it again. I am sure that he must feel very deeply and of course, he has done a great deal of agonizing of the spirit before producing the article.

I do not know our brother personally but I am sure that he is a man of deep concern and conviction. It is possible that his usage of such terms to characterize the movement with which he has been associated as "absurd," "deception," "sheer nonsense," and "religious hypocrisy" will probably inflame feelings of partisanship and when brethren cease to support him because of this he will feel that it is because of his position, when it might not be that at all.

It behooves us all to realize that others may not see at once what it has taken us so long to see and "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle...in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves." I find this easier to point out to Mel than to practice in my own life.

Yours and HIS,

Carl

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Yours and HIS,
/s/ Carl

¹ Written to Boyce Mouton (1936-).

² Melvert Wendall Byers (1924 -). See "Messenger Service," *Mission Messenger* 28 (July 1966): 127: "Mel Byers, Obert Henderson, and Floyd Mackler have a tremendous dialogue on 'Modern Day Legalism' in the May issue of *Abide*. [See "Modern Day Legalism," *Abide* 2 (May 1966): 1] You can get one by writing to Floyd at Box 607, Pleasant Hill, Oregon." Also see "The Phenomena of Ecclesia," by Melvert W. Byers, *Mission Messenger* 28 (October 1966): 166. At the end of this article WCK writes, "Mel Byers has worked with Oriental [According to Mel Byers he worked in China and Southeast Asia with Russell Morse and his sons Robert, Laverne and Eugene. Mel remembers entering China in 1949 as the Communists were taking the county. He then went to Tibet and then on to Burma – phone call with Mel Byers on 3 July 2006 - TJG] peoples for many years and is currently laboring with Thai. Long an advocate of a more indigenous church he feels that the Thai have taught him much about the body of Christ, as expressed in this article, which was first printed in *Abide*. [See "The Phenomena of Ecclesia," *Abide* 2 (June 1966): 1]. Those who wish to write our brother may address Melvert Byers, Talat Chiengkam, Changwat, Chiengrai, Thailand." (*Abide* began in Pleasant Hill, Oregon February 1965- ended in Winchester, Kentucky 1970), an independent Christian Church periodical published and edited by Floyd W. Mackler.

³ See "This I Believe . . . This I Must Do!" by Melvert W. Byers, *The Great Commission Reminder* 16 (February 1963): 3. In this issue Byers renounces all forms of denominationalism including the one he refers to as "The Churches of Christ" "The Christian Church" etc. Byers wrote, "That for me to continue under the pretext that the practice of this denomination is New Testament Christianity – is **absurd**. To continue to believe that authentic Christianity will be restored under such a system is **deception**. To persist in hope that such standardized systems of mechanical conformity should plead, let alone lead, the way to unity is, in the light of God's Word – **sheer nonsense!** (sic) I do hereby cast my vote unreservedly against this **religious hypocrisy** by withdrawing and declaring myself free from its restricted and retarding influences." (Emphasis mine – TJG).

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Mel Byers first left for China via a freighter, the USS China Bear in 1947 and continued to serve in the Orient for the next 20 years. Prior to this he had attended Northwest Christian College serving in two pastorates in Oregon and working with Elery Parrish in the establishment of new congregations.

By 1950 China had fallen into Communist hands. Mel with another companion, La Verne Morse, evacuated north through Tibet then down into Burma to help in the Lisu and Rawang tribal work.

During his first furlough and attending the School of Missionary Medicine at BIOLA Mel met his wife, June Warden. They were married in 1952 and together set sail for the Orient. China and Burma had closed to missionary work so they turned to Thailand locating in a northern village along the Laotian border. Here they lived in a small Thai house which became their home for the next 15 years. Seven of their ten children were born in this house.. Through example and itinerant preaching several Christian groups were formed which became the nucleus for indigenous churches.

In 1968 the Byers family took up residency in the United States in the interest of their childrens education. Mel Served as pastor in the Stayton Church of Christ for 10 years and the Yamhil Christian Church for 11 years. He is currently serving as interim pastor of the Sheridan Christian church.

Along with many trips back to Thailand Mel has been active in youth camps and retreats with special conferences and meetings in Ireland, Mexico, Irian Jaya and Thailand.

THE GREAT COMMISSION REMINDER

Among the Tribes of Northern Thailand

*"Go ye into all the world,
and preach the gospel."*
MARK 16:15

Published and mailed free by
MEL and JUNE BYERS
Talat Chiengkam,
Changwat Chiangrai,
Thailand, Asia



*"And the heathen shall
know that I am the Lord,
when I shall be sanctified
in you before their eyes."*
EZEK. 36:23

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NO. 1

FEBRUARY, 1963

VOL. 16

THIS I BELIEVE . . .

THIS I MUST DO !

(NOTE: The following is my own personal statement and decision. It is the result of many years of wrestling and prayer. I pray its message and content shall be understood by all who read it.)

It is the demanding conclusion of my own inward conflict and inconsistency regarding our present day "churchanity" and its more practical aspects as experienced in missionary endeavor. This statement is sent forth in fear and trembling; trembling in that God demands me to act; fear in that many will misunderstand. Still, this is what I believe - and it is what I must do !

If there are any further questions or doubts as to my position "in Christ only" you are more than welcome to correspond with me - Mel Byers.)

This I Believe . . .

This I Must Do!

The rights of man declare men to be a man. When these rights have been violated and crushed, either by violence or an insipid materialism and conformity, then man ceases to be a man, but rather becomes - a thing.

In the realm of religion this is likewise true. Conformity, standardized systems, professionalism and church federations have ruthlessly exploited the precious things of the spirit, remolding them into cold empty traditions, binding rituals and alliances until religion becomes a sickness unto death rather than a means for abundant living. Man is no longer capable of worshipping God as an authentic spiritual being, but rather reacts as a religious marionette, moving in accordance with the majority. Although these nagging pressures of the soul are often subconscious and intangible, they are none the less existent and in continual opposition to the freewill of man, intimidating the soul to a shameful religious cowardice. Cowed down into the bondage of religious conformity man no longer functions in his total capacity as a man, hence is unable to pursue God with his whole heart.

Modern "christianity" is such a restricting force. Pressured by religious conformity and badgered by accepted norms, the true seeker is no longer free to pursue God with a pure heart. Against this kind of Christianity I am forced to rebel. I can do nothing else but cast my vote against such a system; and I do so, by withdrawing and declaring myself free, both in written word and deed, from those aspects of "christianity" which retard the soul in its quest for God and its true expression of religious freedom. There is no other alternative. Here is the only recourse left by which to restore the integrity of my own soul and true identity as a man. Here alone is that freedom by which a man is able to do that one thing needful, namely; give himself wholly to God.

The desolations of my own soul, the many apprehensions of the past years have been crowding me - I can no longer resist. I must cast these weights aside and draw closer to God! I am compelled to storm the gates and press into holiness. It is imperative that I seek God with my whole heart - and with a pure heart. This is impossible until one has died to those hindering and restricting forces which adulterate the soul. Against these things I protest.

Many will object. Others will misunderstand. Some will merely toss these words aside as a passing fancy. I am, none the less, under a divine compunction to act - even as I believe. Years of wrestling and prayer, searching and frustration, have at last fomented into this final decree, which for me, is not the end - but a new beginning.

Searching my own conscience and with God being the final judge and witness, I do hereby set forth this declaration for personal liberty.

RESOLVE NO. 1.

(Believing that the divided condition of Christianity is not only ambiguous but quite impossible when defined in the light of the "one body" declared in God's Word, I can do

no less than renounce and reckon as dead all relationships with those existing bodies, whether in the form of denominational groups, evangelistic societies, missionary organizations or the vague concepts of "inter-denominational" as employed by these independent bodies.)

IN MY OWN PARTICULAR CASE THIS MEANS:

That in so far as the "Restoration Movement", often referred to as "The Churches of Christ" "The Christian Church" and etc., is by all outward appearance, as well as inward intention, denominational in character, I am left with no other alternative but to reject all identification with these denominational peculiarities which take for granted my membership in this denomination. Formal release from these denominational markings will, I believe, set me free to seek that more wholesome and coveted position of being simply - "in Christ only."

That since identification with a movement or denomination is often superficially based solely on ones former associations, background and present financial ties, I have no choice but to reject even this so that all may understand that from henceforth my relationship and oneness with God, and God's people everywhere, is based upon another standard, namely; "in Christ only."

That although fervently cherishing and contending for the "good" in the "Restoration Movement", I am none the less compelled, in all truth, to reject it all, that by rejecting it all I might once again regain it all - minus its denominational character; and that fellowship with those "in Christ" might not be based upon doctrine and practice which is more - or less - than the demands of scripture, but rather, tested alone upon the fact and presence of Jesus Christ in that gracious liberty which is always attended by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

That for me to continue under the pretext that the practice of this denomination is New Testament Christianity - is absurd. To continue to believe that authentic Christianity will be restored under such a system is deception. To persist in hope that such standardized systems of mechanical conformity should plead, let alone lead, the way to unity is, in the light of God's Word - sheer nonsense! I do hereby cast my vote unreservedly against this religious hypocrisy by withdrawing and declaring myself free from its restricting and retarding influences.

~O glorious liberty - thou jewel!

RESOLVE NO. 2.

Fully aware that I am but an insignificant one, subject to all manner of human faults and weaknesses, I am, nevertheless, determined to seek fuller identification with that true "oneness" which is "in Christ"; a firmly knitted, unchanging unity, which in the past, present and future, has not, is not and shall not be divided.

Believing that "in Christ" there is neither a "Restoration movement" or a "Churches of Christ" denomination - there is only "in Christ", I cast my vote in favor of the latter.

Believing that true "oneness" in Christ is not determined by the opinion of religious bodies or individuals on what the Bible says, but rather, it is determined by the fact and

presence of God Himself in the individual or group through the agency of the Holy Spirit. If God is present there is "oneness"; and inversely, if God is not present there is not "oneness", regardless of what men may legislate or desire.

Believing also that the fact of God's presence is not measured by ones conformity to a given ritual or creed, written or unwritten, spoken or unspoken. The actual presence of God is not established by slavishly declaring ones conformity to God's Word; for example, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where the Bible is silent, we are silent;" but rather, ones conformity to the Word of God is established by the fact of God's actual presence in ones life; for example, "Where God is present, God speaks, and where God is absent - there is silence."

Therefore, valid "oneness" in Christ is not created by trying to bring into existence what man considers to be "conformity to God's Word"; rather, a "one mind concerning God's Word" will be a demonstrated fact when men are simply and literally - "in Christ only".

Thus believing, that a factual indwelling of the Holy Spirit creates a mutual attraction among the individual members of His body, I do hereby earnestly endeavor to cultivate the conditions in my life which will best allow the Holy Spirit to perfect the manifestations of "oneness" both inwardly and outwardly. As an individual member I will earnestly endeavor to keep myself so inclined and exposed to God's Word that His fullness may always indwell, and if He indwells, "oneness" with Him and others is maintained in an unbroken unity; hence the expression, " - endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit."

PRACTICAL REASONS:

The mission field in Thailand consists of many organizations which in fact are nothing more than denominations in disguise; each covetously pursuing its own "practice and policy", many under the yoke of comity agreements, others compromisingly merged into the National Church, which is mainly the Presbyterian church consisting of Disciples of Christ, Northern Baptist and etc.

During the past few years I have worked in a flexible fellowship and cooperation with other independent missionaries. In this particular area these missionaries are affiliated with the "Restoration movement", i.e. "The Christian Church, Churches of Christ" denomination. Although we have never been an "organized mission", we are, none the less, regarded by others as just another denominational group. Though we seek to establish indigenous churches founded upon the principles of the New Testament - our message and subsequent action is often inconsistent. Unwritten pressure to group conformity, unbreakable traditions of a denominational character and our unnatural bondage to monetary ties causes other missionaries as well as the nationals to rightfully question the position we hold. Bondage to these denominational markings restricts and colors the message we preach and the position we proclaim.

Formal release from these unnatural affiliations and denominational markings, I believe, will grant me the liberty to be what I claim to be. In doing this I will have sacrificed only one thing, my denominational peculiarities - and in truth - this needs to be done!

RESOLVE NO. 3.

I do hereby renounce all conformity to cold spiritless doctrine, human traditions and creeds of a denominational bias which for so long have chilled my soul and restricted my spiritual growth.

Having been set free from these human systems, I am at last, free to pursue God with a pure heart. Free to love God fully! Once more grasping for God and Him alone. Free to pursue holiness without the damning influence of group opinion and the constant nagging of cold doctrinal half-truths. Free to expose myself unreservedly before God for anything God may desire. At last, free to become a fool, to become poor, to become a nothing – only that I might gain Him.

WHAT THIS DECREE MEANS IN PARTICULAR:

(1) Henceforth I shall no longer be regarded as a member of the "Churches of Christ – The Christian Church" denomination, sometimes known as the "Restoration movement". Believing that I possess neither the right nor the responsibility for selecting one denomination or brotherhood above another, but rather accepting my responsibility "in Christ", I shall be free and separate from them all.

(2) That the various individuals and churches affiliated with this movement shall henceforth be under no financial obligation to me whatsoever as a representative of their denomination; but rather, to the best of my ability, I shall henceforth represent Jesus Christ alone, both in word and deed.

(3) That I shall no longer operate in the capacity of a paid missionary, but rather as a "servant of Jesus Christ" whether at home or abroad. My duties under God shall be the duties of an evangelist to the members of Christ's body universal.

No longer shall I serve under a promised stipend in the manner of a hired religionist, choosing rather to seek the face of my God and Him alone. If He elects to supply my needs through the various members of His Body, then I am at liberty to receive these mercies. If He guides me to work and pay my own way, then I am equally at liberty to do this. If He chooses to withdraw me from this field, or keep me here – it is His will I covet.

WHAT THIS DECREE DOES NOT MEAN:

(1) It does not mean that true personal friendships and true spiritual ties in the Lord need to be affected in any way. If we are not denominational then it will only test that which we have long advocated, i.e., "In essentials, unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things love."

I am still the same "Mel Byers." The Lord's dealing in my life has led me to a "new standing ground", a new point of reference by which to deepen my own spiritual life and more perfectly fulfill that ministry intrusted to me. I believe this is for the better. This liberty I freely grant to others; I trust it shall be granted to me.

(2) It does not mean that this particular action is a pattern for others, nor does it represent the thought and action of my fellow missionaries; on the contrary, this is God's dealing with me, and me alone.

(3) It does not indicate that I have declared war on the "Restoration movement". It simply means that, at last, this movement has for my life come into its proper perspective in its relation to all other movements and denominations. One is not to be preferred above the other, for in their denominational aspects they are all wrong; and at last, there is something much better than any - "in Christ only."

(4) Regarding future support, it does not mean that I am not grateful for all that God's people have done for me, nor that I am not dependent upon the Lord's people - if this is the way the Lord chooses. However, under the circumstances it would be better for each individual and church to reconsider, and feel perfectly free in the matter. I suggest the following:

(a) Churches and individuals should no longer extend support just because it is a policy or a promise, or as a blind obligation and duty. Under these circumstances it would be better if money is not extended. It is altogether unprofitable.

(b) Unless there is a definite direction of God's Spirit moving in your heart to give to this work, then you are under no obligation. Give not in response to a written plea, or a suggestion from the pulpit, but in direct response to God's unction within your heart. This is not trite phraseology - this is to be observed literally. Give unto the Lord in response to His direction. It is His work. Give in complete trust and confidence - otherwise, better not give. Seal your giving with fervent prayer and then arise and walk in holiness of life even as you have prayed and given.

(c) In similar manner I shall wait upon the Lord for myself and my family. The Lord who multiplied the loaves and fishes can surely supply my meager needs. That which comes to me I shall receive in the same spirit. If the Lord prompts you to give, then you are at liberty to give and I am at liberty to receive; otherwise, we are acting outside the will of God and the authority of Him manages the affairs of His church.

CONCLUSION:

Realizing that this statement is incomplete and that it will give rise to doubts and misunderstanding, I am ready to give answer concerning any points raised in this declaration. If others have more light and a deeper understanding regarding these things, I can only beg for patience and kindness - in due time I shall catch up. If we do not agree I ask for tolerance and love as we seek to labor side by side in our differences, believing that each one is sincere and that in the end truth will triumph and make us one. If this statement strikes out against error and punctures personal egotism and denominational pride - then I pray the hurt will go deep. If perchance there is agreement then may that fellowship be in Spirit and truth.

Above all may God put steel into our faith and raise up for Himself, men and women with courage, willing to rise up and conquer the mundane systems of men, a professional

ministry and a depressing conformity. Men and women who are not afraid to think - and then act; those who will once again storm the gates of holiness and press into the Kingdom.

In this declaration I believe I have the guidance of the Lord, attested by the fact that it is not after the natural man to write in this manner. Being sorely pressed, however, by a higher compulsion, I am cast at the mercy of God. He is the supreme witness and final judge. The future is uncertain, but when seen through the eye of faith it is, at last - ordered by God. Blessed privilege! How quickly the impoverished soul stretches Godward. No longer shall my soul weep - but shall be satisfied completely with God, His closeness, His holiness. O God, thou art my all in all!

Written this day, January 1, 1963 by my own hand, to the people of God at large with a deep concern and love, and with the prayer that all may be one "In Christ."

By faith in Him,
Melvert W. Byers

MAILED BY:

MR. GEO. KEADY
6405 S. E. 17TH AVE.
PORTLAND 2, OREGON

RETURN REQUESTED

abide



Vol. 2

MAY 1966

No. 4

MODERN DAY LEGALISM

(OBERT HENDERSON OF LOVELAND, COLORADO AND MELVERT BYERS OF THAILAND JOIN WITH THE EDITOR IN THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION.)

DEFINE AND CLARIFY THE TERM "LEGALISM" AS YOU WISH TO EMPLOY IT.

HENDERSON: BY "LEGALISM" I REFER TO A CONCEPT WHICH VIEWS RIGHTEOUSNESS OR JUSTIFICATION TO BE THE RESULT OF WORKS OF LAW PERFORMED BY ONE'S OWN STRENGTH AND POWER, THUS HAVING HUMAN MERIT ATTACHED.

BYERS: THEOLOGICALLY "LEGALISM" MEANS "STRICTNESS TO A LAW, TO A CODE OF DEEDS OR OBSERVANCES AS A MEANS OF JUSTIFICATION." TODAY CERTAIN SEGMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY ARE LABELED "LEGALISTIC" NOT BECAUSE THEY SEEK MERIT BY DOING GOOD LIKE THE BUDDHIST, NOR BECAUSE THEY SEEK JUSTIFICATION BY A LEGAL STRICTNESS TO THE MOSAIC LAW LIKE THE JEW; BUT BECAUSE THEY HOLD A PECULIAR ATTITUDE TOWARDS RELIGIOUS TRUTH. THEY ARE "LEGALISTIC" BECAUSE OF THEIR EMPHASIS UPON CERTAIN DEEDS AND OBSERVANCES AS A MEANS TO ENHANCE OR FORTIFY THEIR JUSTIFICATION OR RIGHT STANDING BEFORE GOD. THIS IS A SUBTLE EXPRESSION OF A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S FREE GRACE AND THE FINISHED WORK OF THE CROSS. IT IS A CONVENIENT DOCTRINAL-IN-BETWEEN WHICH ALLOWS SELF TO LIVE AND EXERT ITS OWN FLESHLY WORKS. LEGALISM EMPLOYS OBEDIENCE AND STRICTNESS TO DEEDS AND OBSERVANCES AS A FLESHLY "RIDER" ADDED ONTO GOD'S INSURANCE POLICY OF GRACE. SELF IS NEVER QUITE SURE OF ITS JUSTIFICATION. A LEGALISTIC ATTITUDE EXPRESSES THIS INSECURITY BY FASTENING A "TOE-THE-MARK" ATTITUDE--JUST IN CASE WE MISSED SOMETHING.

MACKLER: "LEGALISM" IS ANY SYSTEM OF THOUGHT OR PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR WHICH MAKES LAW A BASIC PRESUPPOSITION UPON WHICH ALL ELSE IS CONTINGENT IN MAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. IT REFERS TO ANY LEGAL PRESCRIPTION WHATSOEVER - WHETHER CONCEIVED AS BINDING IN SALVATION OR

Talat Chiengkam
Changwat Chiangrai

May 29, 1963

Dear Brother Boyce ,

Greetings to you in the name of Jesus, whom to know is life abundant and eternal.

We have just returned from a short vacation up in the mountains with my brother Don and his family. The combined families have 13 children so we put everything on a camp schedule and it was enjoyed by all. In between times Don and I had a good fellowship together discussing the things of the Kingdom. Upon returning home your letter was waiting for me.

I especially appreciated the spirit in which your letter was written . To often one receives letters with a note of bitterness regarding the statement I put out. Most of this is due to misunderstanding, however. I am glad to give answer concerning many of the questions raised. It forces me to re-think and face the problems squarely. In this I hope that the truth will become more clear then ever.

You mentioned something about our present Bible College system and a new idea which was being used along the "local Bible Institute level." I also believe this approaching a better way then the kind of system employed to-day. Just in passing I might note that recently I talked with some Finnish missionaries who mentioned that this is the method they use in Finland. As I understand it some of the teachers are permanent but the Institute shifts about from one locality to another never being allowed to settle in one place. By de-centralizing the Bible collage and campus with its tradition they do away with a lot of problems. This is just a thought I pass on to you.

Now concerning the points where we disagree regarding the statement I sent out. I feel, again, it is a matter of misunderstanding rather than disagreement. You feel I have placed myself under a unnecessary handicap and that now some doors will be closed. Many have mentioned the same thing. Nowhere have I mentioned that I am disfellowshipping from anyone. If there is any disfellowshipping it will have to be done by someone else. If we are "brethren in Christ" then there is nothing to go out from or enter into. I have only asked to be excused from "loyalty to a movement" and from those binding unwritten traditions which denominate us as sectarian. Though doors may be closed at first, I believe that time, along with my own attitude and action will once again re-open those doors. When that time comes I will be speaking from a different platform - not a weakened diluted voice within a movement but, I trust, a strong and positive voice "in Christ only." The latter I believe will carry much more weight. Somehow it seems this could not be possible unless I made some kind of a statement or stand in this regard.

Be this as it may, being on the mission field I have very little opportunity to enter any of the doors at home. Since the statement not only involved churches at home but also the work here in Thailand, I felt, all things added together it was better to clear the air. If by Gods grace I can act in love, I believe that in time it will be understood.

What you say about Paul and his identification with all kinds and situations as a matter of expediency is quite correct. This kind of tolerance is even more needed on the mission field than in the homeland.

In closing you mentioned that the evangelist should labor under the oversight of a good eldership and that you wished I was under a good eldership now. I could wish for nothing better myself. I have had good support and interest from a couple of churches at home and have written manytimes asking the eldership to exert more authority, more concern, more responsibility (other then just money) on behalf of Thailand. There has been no response. I also believe this is the scriptural way and I desire it. I am exhausted of ways and means to implement this method, however. If you have any ideas send them along.

I am happy to make your acquaintance through this letter. Continue to pray for Thailand. May the Lord give us a keener insight to His Church and then gives us the courage to act and stand upon these truths. If you have any other questions or doubts please feel free to write.

Peace be with you.

By faith in Him,

myel

Reflections Reflections



On Oversight

By BOYCE MOUTON

WHEN I was a student in college, longer ago than I care to admit, we had a chapel speaker who insisted that every missionary ought to be under the oversight of an eldership. His text upon that occasion was Acts 13. He pointed out that Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the church at Antioch and that they reported back to that church upon the completion of their journey.

This seemed to me to provide a Biblical and a practical "check and balance." I was already aware of the painful fact that some missionaries had betrayed the trust of their supporting churches and the thought that oversight by the elders was "Scriptural" made the matter beyond the jurisdiction of human judgment.

Thus, I became a zealous proponent of this concept and was pleased to hear of certain missionaries who never made a major decision without a prayerful consultation with their supporting elders. I know of one missionary who has been on the field for more than twenty years who still cannot even return to the States to attend a missionary convention without the permission of his elders. The fact that he had been extremely successful as a missionary and that his supporting church had shriveled up and almost died was beside the point. I even participated in this kind of "oversight" by acting as a part-time liaison between a missionary in South America and an eldership here in the Midwest. Whatever problems we encountered in such an arrangement were considered as merely a "part of the territory" for when something is "Scriptural" it is obviously too sacred to tamper with.

Several years ago I determined to set forth in order some of these things which are most surely believed among us . . . and to prove them by the Scriptures. The Antioch example seemed like a good place to start and I expected to use this example to prove the Biblical validity of missionaries serving under the "oversight" of elders.

Permit me to confess that the more closely I examined the Scriptures the more my preconceptions tended to vanish like a vapor. As a matter of fact, I could not even prove that the church in Antioch of Syria had elders. Furthermore, I came to conclude that my understanding of the relationship of Barnabas and Saul to the church at Antioch was 180 degrees off course.

A turning point—A turning point in my own study came with reference to the Greek word which is translated as "recommended" in Acts 14:26 and 15:40 (*King James Version*).

I noted that Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch from which they had been "recommended" to the grace of God (Acts 14:26).

I also noted that when Paul and Barnabas had a sharp disagreement, Paul chose Silas and departed, being "recom-

mended" by the brethren unto the grace of God.

I was curious to know what the Bible meant by "recommended" for it might provide insight into the relationship between these men and the Antioch church.

The Greek word translated as "recommended" is *paradi-domi* which literally means to "give over." It occurs 120 times in the New Testament Scriptures, and its primary usage involves giving over to judgment and death. Most of the passages refer to Jesus who was "given over" in this regard.

The word is incredibly strong and must have created a special sensation in the minds of people in the first century. Luke used it in Acts to refer to the "delivering up" of Jesus to be crucified (3:13); the "delivering" of Christians to prison (8:3; 22:4); the "delivering" of Paul to the Gentiles and imprisonment (21:11); and of Paul's subsequent "deliverance" to a Roman prison (28:17).

The meaning of the word is quite obvious. For example, when Pilate "gave over" Jesus it meant that he was relinquishing whatever control he may have had to someone else. He even dramatized this by publicly washing his hands.

When Saul of Tarsus "gave over" or "delivered" prisoners, it meant the same thing. He turned his prisoners over to someone else. They could do with these prisoners as they wished while he went out and rounded up some more.

As incredible as it might seem, this is the very word which the Holy Spirit used to describe the relationship between the church at Antioch and their missionaries. Barnabas and Saul were not given over to prison and death, but with the same dramatic sense of finality they were given over to the grace of God. Whatever control the church may have had over these men in the past was now being relinquished. The future was no longer in their hands but in the hands of their Creator and thus, they were "recommended" by the brethren unto the grace of God.

Rivers and fountainheads—I used to say "a church can no more rise above its leaders than a river can rise above its fountainhead." Yet, it was obvious to me that Saul of Tarsus advanced beyond any of the leaders in the church at Antioch. He labored more abundantly than any of the apostles and was used of God to write more books of the Bible than any other inspired man. I am convinced that such a dramatic development would not have been possible if Paul had been under the "control" of the church at Antioch.

It is also erroneous to assume that leaders in a church are its source of spiritual life. They may be channels through which the "River of Life" passes, but the fountainhead of that river is Jesus Christ. He is the Author and Perfecter of our faith and those who are "given over" to Him have access to the ultimate in "oversight."

Every parent ought to have the dream that their children will do better than they did. Quite frequently this does occur, but it can only happen when the parents are wise enough to permit their children at some point to be liberated from their control. A father who is completely illiterate can have a son graduate from college . . . if he will only let him. It is a frightening thing to see your children go away to college. There are many dangers associated with such a risk. There is a certain sense of security which we feel when our children are dutifully at home responding to our personal instructions.

Church leaders may feel the same sense of security and well-being when they are in absolute control of everything which goes on. That may be the way it is done in many congregations, but that is not the way it was done at Antioch.

The church at Antioch did not try to control Barnabas and Saul. They took their hands off of these men and turned them over to the grace of God. They recognized their own limitations and recommended them to the care of the ultimate teacher and guide. They believed that God was perfectly capable of delivering the godly out of temptation and of reserving the unjust unto punishment. The benefits involved in such a risk far outweighed the dangers, and the Christian world should be eternally grateful that Paul was not controlled by anyone but the Holy Spirit.

The track record—Whatever they did in the first century certainly seemed to work. In a matter of only ten short years Paul had fully preached the gospel from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum and was excited about the possibility of preaching also in Rome and Spain (Romans 15:19 ff.).

When confronted by the bright light of an open door he did not have to write back home for permission or instructions. Sometimes open doors can close quite quickly. Therefore, he moved immediately as God directed. Sometimes his best laid plans would fall through and he would be forbidden to preach in Asia or Bithynia. On other occasions he may receive a vision to come to Macedonia, or to remain steadfastly in Corinth.

When we needed helpers God guided him to men like Timothy and Luke. In the absence of human help God sent an angel to his side to bring him comfort during those dark and difficult days of storm and shipwreck.

Certainly there are dangers associated in granting such freedom to a fallible human being. He may betray the Lord like Judas did. He might love this present world to such an extent that he would depart like Demas. He may even make shipwreck of the faith like Hymenaeus and Alexander.

Based upon the information given to us in the Holy Bible, however, it seems that the confidence which the church at Antioch placed upon Barnabas, Saul and Silas was well founded. We have every reason to believe that these men remained faithful unto death and have now received the crown of life.



Shall we dare?—It may be that some of you have had experiences similar to my own. Perhaps you too have made the mistake of equating "oversight" with "control." Perhaps you have in all good conscience felt an obligation to try to control some church, or missionary, or Christian worker.

Now we have injected into the picture additional information upon which you might feel constrained to "reflect" just as I have. Perhaps the Christian workers with whom you are associated need to be trusted more than they need to be controlled. Perhaps God is better able to orchestrate their work and ministry than any human board or committee. Perhaps the crying need of the hour is for these workers to be handed over to Jesus with no strings attached.

The Good Shepherd has had a lot of experience with sheep of every description. When His sheep hear His voice and follow His leading they will dare the incredible and do the impossible. They do not need to be "conformed" by outward pressure and human manipulation, they need to be "transformed" by the power of His Spirit within.

There are some who may betray this trust, but I am convinced that they are few and far between. The crying need of the hour is not to protect the cause of Christ by burying His workers in bureaucracy, but by turning them loose on the cutting edge of life.

The beautiful trust which Paul received he passed on to others. When he left his beloved brethren from Ephesus he gave to them this beautiful benediction.

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

God help us to do the same.

Boyce Mouton ministers with First Christian Church, Carl Junction, Mo.

1963

Memo from the desk of Carl Ketcherside

Los Angeles-Long Beach in October. Bill Jessup is to be at Cottage Grove, so will be able to lay our final plans for the southern California rally. I'll be on short schedule at the time and will not be able to visit many other places, so will no doubt restrict my efforts to the area around Los Angeles that time.

I do hope that you have a safe trip to La Crosse and return and I know that Dale and you will have thrilling experiences under the leading of the Spirit. May God be with you!

Yours and His,
Carl

Memo from the desk of Carl Ketcherside
Louisville, Ky.

My beloved brother:

Your good epistle reached me as I was preparing to go to the air port to come to Louisville where I'm engaged in a study both day and night. I have with me Bro. Jim Furniss, of W. Union who went to the Bible school in San Jose for several years, then did work at Cincinnati. It is a privilege to have him. He is a fine brother.

Today I had luncheon in the home of E. L. Jorgenson, who has several times spoken at Lakewood where Bill Jessup now labors. We talked at length about the "fellowship rally" in which I will speak in that area near

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Yours and His,
/s/ Carl

¹ This letter was written to Boyce Mouton (1936 - ?) *circa* 1963.

² Elmer Leon Jorgenson (1886-1968). E. L. Jorgenson was best known as the compiler of the Great Songs of the Church hymnal, a promoter of premillennial theories and a close friend of R. H. Boll.

³ Lakewood, California.

⁴ Bill Jessup was President of San Jose Bible College for many years.

⁵ La Crosse, Wisconsin.

⁶ Dale Crain, a close friend of Boyce Mouton.

Gopher Campus



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MISSION MESSENGER
2360 GARDNER DRIVE
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63136

MOTOR LODGE

925 Fourth Street S.E.

Federal 3-5313

Minneapolis 14, Minnesota

February 7, 1964

My dear Boyce:

It is a genuine privilege to hear from you again. When I see Curt and Sue, which is infrequently now, they speak of you and we contemplate again the opportunities which have come to our family to meet you. I am very happy indeed that you will remain in that area temporarily and am just as pleased to know that the contacts between the brethren of various segments continues with such a good spirit of fraternity.

My time is booked almost solid for this year and is fast filling for next. Much of this consists of forums on fellowship and unity, not all of them within the restoration movement background. For that reason, I shall need to defer coming to California this spring. We did not as yet have anything definite as to dates, etc. But I shall still plan to come during the year as I think this may be very vital. When I do, and dates are released, if you will contact me again, I shall certainly give every thought to coming to San Jose for a night and allowing the brethren, all of them, to question me at any length and about any point.

I can understand how most of the fellows would feel about announcing my coming to the various congregations. All of these have roots "down home" and frequently that is Texas, Oklahoma, etc., and you might have more success by announcing that Satan is coming to town to divide the brethren than to mention that I am coming to talk about helping unite them. But there has never been such a prospect for better days. I note that one brother mentions that the Denver meeting set the cause of unity back twenty years. Never was there a more mistaken concept. It is probably the result of listening to only one segment. Do not forget that since that time we have held these meetings in New Mexico, in Dallas, Texas, and in other places. It is possible that the Denver work kindled a flame of hope and expectancy that all the cold waters of orthodoxy will never be able to quench.

I think that this is the first time since the death of Alexander Campbell and the rise of our factional spirit in the restoration movement that a plea is literally cutting across all lines, going into and affecting all factions from the Disciples to the lowliest defender of fermented wine as a test of fellowship. The next five years will be the greatest period in the restoration movement in more than a century. Let us not, like Rip Van Winkle, sleep completely through the Revolution.

Yours and HIS,

Care

*You are at liberty to show this letter
with anyone!*

2360 Gardner Drive
Saint Louis, Missouri 63136
August 14, 1964

Dear Boyce:

I have just returned from Little Rock, Arkansas, and am making arrangements to go to Milligan College, Tennessee, so that my letter will be brief, and wholly inadequate as a reply to your good and gracious epistle relative to your own decision and to the work of the Lord.

I shall note your last statement first, the one which relates to my holding in abeyance the letter of Brother Thomas. There are several considerations which enter into the matter and which I have never taken the occasion to divulge. In every attempt at reform one treads a narrow line between the advisable and inadvisable, and there is always a possibility of a breakthrough - either of the crust (which would allow one to disappear from sight) or of the Spirit (which would change the complexion of a movement overnight).

There must be ever a sense of timing, of judiciousness, a sensing of the hearts of the people, a recognition of how much can be said and to and about whom and what. Jesus said, "I have many things to say unto you which you are not yet able to bear." There are some conditions that are fermenting and bubbling beneath the surface of the group who are allied with the North American Christian Convention, for instance, which will determine within the next few years which way the "Appearing Brotherhood" will go. At such a time it is probably not appropriate for the Mission Messenger to enter into the lists overtly. To do so under the pressures which now are seething would only lay us open to having taken sides. This we must avoid at all costs and I take pleasure in the fact that, thus far, both groups feel that I am with the other too much.

I have given fairly close study to the problem of whether this would have been published had it have been written about Abilene or Nashville and I doubt that it would have been, for the simple reason that we have turned down three articles, some by faculty members, who wanted to use Mission Messenger to assail directly and by name the institutions of which they were then, or had been a part. As an editor whose mail puts a finger on the pulse of the whole restoration movement, one has to exercise his best judgment in the light of all of the facts, and not make the mistake of estimating the whole situation in the light of what transpires within one segment.

Your life will be changed somewhat as you pursue your new line of approach to His service. I think I can know how you must have been feeling all along and how you must have hoped that it would turn out differently. But God does not always work as we would plan and now that you are to have a wider scope of influence I shall be praying most earnestly for you and for the brethren who will be standing behind your efforts.

I am eager that God will open up great doors and effectual for you and I feel sure that He will do so, seeing your commitment to fanning the flames of reform - which is almost a synonym for repentance, the theme of all his prophets and evangelistic laborers in days of yore. I am looking forward to seeing you and I pray for you very sincerely. I am as always

Yours and HIS,



"We are your servants for Jesus' sake"

Circa July/Aug
1965

Oak Hill Chapel

A MEETING PLACE FOR CHRISTIANS

4088 PARKER AVE. (AT OAK HILL)

ST. LOUIS 16, MISSOURI

My dear Boyce:

We are grateful to the kind providence which made it possible for you to arrive in your new home without incident, and we trust that you will have doors of service opened to you there which will make it possible for you to serve Him acceptably "whom having not seen we love." I know that it will be a challenging work and I shall not cease to pray for you that you may find peace and serenity of spirit through the indwelling Spirit of God which grants us the power to serve.

Nell is placing the names of the brethren on the list to receive the paper. I sincerely trust that this is not an inopportune time to do so, for I shall be reviewing the various segments of the disciple brotherhood and they might not have the background that regular readers have had. It is my hope to be able to write in such a manner that those who disagree with the content of my articles cannot find fault with the spirit of the writer, but one does not know how new readers will look at a thing when plunged into it. If these brethren read what I have to say about the non-instrumental churches they will observe that I am not partial and am at least free from the galling and intolerable party spirit.

As time goes on you will perhaps find other brethren in all of the varied groups who ought to have the paper, and if you find the names of interested brethren among those attending the school I should like to be able to add them to the list. I will keep their subscription list on a confidential basis. We do not disclose information in any event as to who sent in names and addresses. It could be that you could send us a list of student names and addresses and we could send them the paper for awhile with no obligation to yourself or to them.

I am starting a series of articles when I finish with the current issues which I think will be fundamental as to why we have become sidetracked. I am very anxious to get at the series, but I have a lot to do yet in dealing with why there needs to be a restoration of the Restoration. I propose before I am through to suggest things of a very practical nature that will help us to see the way out of the mess into which we have fallen in these days. That will then lead to the new series which I trust to make as effective as any I have ever written.

In the meantime, may the blessings of the Lord abide with you and yours, and may His grace sustain you in all things unto His glory.

Your brother in HIM,

2360 Gardner Drive
Saint Louis 36, Missouri

Case

MISSION MESSENGER
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

October 5, 1965

My dear Boyce:

I'd like to suggest that you correspond with Richard Kerr, 1718 Brake, Carrollton, Texas 75006. Dick is with American Air Lines, in Dallas, and this is a suburban area just outside of Dallas. I feel certain that Dick will get in touch with the brother whom you immersed and make it possible for him to meet some of the brethren.

Dick is a regular reader of Mission Messenger and is sympathetic to our attempt to make it possible for the brethren to enjoy the fellowship which they have through the Spirit across the lines men have drawn.

I knew that you were back in this good state and in the Ozark region, but had no idea that you were reverting to the primitive and attempting to reconstruct the saga of Daniel Boone. You must have read that book "We took to the Woods." Incidentally, if you did not read it, it will be worth your time, or at least I found it so.

You are barking up the right tree, my friend, when you talk to me about pitching a tent among the shagbark hickory trees, and holding communion with wood ticks. I have only a very thin veneer of civilization over my rugged heart that palpitates for the tall timber.

I have just finished writing to Dean whom I hope to see while in San Jose in January. Love to you and yours from
Yours and HIS,

Carl

Williamsburg Inn
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

139 Signal Hill Drive
Saint Louis, Missouri 63121
August 23, 1968

Dear Boyce:

It is a great privilege to hear from you once again. When I was in San Jose the last time we spoke often of you when I was with the brethren with whom you had labored in that section of the vineyard. I am wondering what changes will be made at the college there now that Woodrow will be the president. I am sorry to learn about the passing of Brother Pratt.

Yes, I knew of the new task to be assumed by Roy and Dale and I am eagerly praying for their success on one of the greatest pagan evangelistic fields in the twentieth century. They will be meeting a totally new challenge if they enter into real encounter as they should, and they will either shake something or be shaken. They will not be the same, in either event.

I admit that seldom indeed has any movement ever been reformed from within. But still I am committed to the task of trying because, while I am not a born optimist I am a "born again optimist." I suspect that Paul should not have tried to reform Corinth if he had been motivated by a spirit of inability to get the job done. But the Spirit can do strange and new things and we are only obligated to work as if all depended upon us the while we trust in Him for everything.

I am an avid reader of history but I am never discouraged by it, for while it tends to repeat itself, I am not committed to accepting that "all things continue as they were from the fathers." God can intervene in ways that seem rather impossible to us and I shall continue to act as if He will!

I would like to be with you on December 20 but unfortunately I am booked for that weekend and the next. It is always a pleasure to hear from you. We love you and your whole family a great deal. You are very dear unto us. May His grace be with you and all of yours is the prayer of

Yours and HIS,

Carl