ON THE HOME FRONT

Gary Colley

We had excellent attendance on Sunday, April 16, with visitors from our community and the surrounding area. Some came that perhaps will not return until the Christmas holidays roll around. They seem to think that man-made commandments are more important than those made by God (Matt. 15:8-9). Is it not strange that men make their decisions by their superstition rather than by God’s revelation in the Bible? Easter and Christmas are not found or commanded in the Bible. The manner of observing these holidays are not revealed in the Bible. And yet most of those in the world will tell us that one date correctly represents the resurrection of Jesus, and the other is a celebration of the birth of Jesus!

In order to become a Christian one must hear or read the Bible (Rom. 10:17). No one is born into this world knowing the Lord’s requirements of faith, repentance, confession of the name of Christ, and baptism into Christ where we receive the remission of sins (Acts 4:12). The Lord promises to add this one to the church of Christ (Acts 2:41, 47). He will not add any to a denomination made by men. Without revelation no one knows the blessings that come to one who lives the Christian life. What are those blessings? In addition to the salvation of our soul, there is purity of life, happiness, humility, a kind, mild forgiving spirit, the privilege of prayer, being a better husband/wife, being a better parent to our children, being a better neighbor, being a better brother/sister in Christ, and being occupied in the work and worship of the Lord. All of these blessings being accomplished will cause us to have a strong and abiding hope of Heaven!
Why is the church of which you are a member called by the name it wears? Is it in honor of a man, a movement, organizational structure, or of a community type of thinking? These are questions that should be asked by individuals of the religions which they follow. When we say “church of Christ,” we do so because it shows ownership, as well as to whom we show our devotion. English teachers tell us that placing the preposition “of” in the front of a personal noun or pronoun expresses the possessive case. Hence we mean just what the Bible teaches, that this is not “my church,” “our church,” or any man’s church. Since Christ is the builder, this church belongs to Him (Rom. 16:16). Following are several reasons for our wearing the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, who is “the captain” of our salvation, who was made perfect through suffering” (Heb. 2:10).

1. He is our Lord, the ruler of our lives (Acts 2:36-41; I Tim. 6:15; Lk. 6:46).
2. Members of His church have been purchased by His blood (Acts 20:28).
3. He has promised to save His body, the church (Eph. 5:23).
4. We are the recipients of His love (I Jn. 3:1-3; Eph. 5:25).
5. He is the only Way back to our Father in Heaven (Jn. 14:6).
6. We gain entrance into His body through Him (Ga1. 3:26-27).
7. God made Him the chief cornerstone of this church (Eph. 2:20).
8. There is no other foundation except Christ that will stand in the last great day of Judgment (I Cor. 3:11; Matt. 7:24-29).
9. He is the only one through whom we can successfully approach our Heavenly Father in prayer (Heb. 7:24-25).
10. This church belongs to Him as the owner (Matt.16:18).
11. This is the only place where we can be completely subject to Christ (Eph. 5:24, 30).
12. No other except Christ is the Head of His church (Eph. 1:22-23).
13. We have no other message except that He is the Messiah of the world (I Cor. 2:2; 1:23).
14. All who come to Him in this church are cleansed from all past sins in His blood (Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5).
15. We have been divinely (not directly) called by His Gospel (II Thess. 2:14).
16. He has shown us how to please Him in the organization of His church (I Tim. 3:14-15).
17. We gladly wear His name because in the church we are His bride (Rom. 7:4).
18. We come before God’s throne with worship which He has authorized (Jn. 4:24; Heb. 11:6).
19. It is by our advocate’s blood that we may remain cleansed (I Jn. 1:7-9; 2:1-2).
20. He is the only one who knows the terms of membership in His church (Jn. 8:24; Acts 17:30-31; Matt. 10:32-33; Mk. 16:15-16).

It is true that these twenty reasons are given clearly in the New Testament of His blood. Also, He said, “Baptism doth also now save us” (I Pet. 3:21).
It is my sad duty to report the passing of Charles David Jones, Sr., a faithful Gospel preacher for over sixty years. His family and friends called him Charlie. I will refer to him as Charlie in this article. Charlie was part of the Jones family that once was a large part of the Getwell family. Sheer numbers do not tell the whole story. I have been acquainted with quite a few members of this fine family, and one trait that stands out is their faithfulness to Jesus Christ. Charlie carried on with this faithfulness. While in a foxhole during the Korean War, he made a vow to God to give his life to the Lord and to spend the rest of his days preaching the good news of Jesus. Unlike some promises made in these circumstances, Charlie carried through with his vow, making it his life mission. He studied Bible at Freed-Hardeman College and married Helen Louis Richardson in 1961. They were blessed with three children. Charlie served in the ministry in Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi, Pakistan, and Canada. His last preaching position was at the Parkview Church of Christ in Odessa, Texas, where he preached for twenty-five years. It is said that they could not talk about Charlie without talking about the Lord—they were inseparable. Despite spending hours ministering to others, he never neglected spending time with his family. He lost his wife in October of last year. Charlie was bedfast in the end staying with family in Phoenix, Arizona. Toward the end he called out his wife’s name and prayed for God to take him; he wanted to go home to be with his mother and his wife. At the beginning of this article I stated I was saddened to announce the passing of Charlie, but I misspoke. Toward the end Charlie was in constant pain and had lost his eyesight, but when he left this life, the next moment in Paradise there was no pain, and he could see our Lord Jesus Christ. “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

Four times a year we are treated with the new issue of The Spiritual Sword. Each issue is a masterpiece with Alan Highers at the helm as the editor. The topics he chooses are always timely and thought provoking. The writers who contribute to each issue are talented, but more importantly, they are true to the Word. The theme of the current issue is “Highlights from the Major Prophets.” The contributing writers are the following: Hugh Fulford, Phil Sanders, Stan Mitchell, Gary Colley, Gary Hampton, Allen Webster, Alan Highers, David Pharr, Glenn Colley, Jay Lockhart, and David Powell. The writers look at verses from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. I quote from brother Highers’ editorial as he sums up the purpose of this issue: “These highlights from the Major Prophets should challenge us and provoke us to further study and examination of this truly rich storehouse of divine wisdom.”

A big thank you goes to those who helped with our recent kids egg hunt.

While brother Colley was recently away, we were blessed to have Keith Mosher speak to us. One take-away point from his lesson stuck in my head. He pointed out that the Lord’s day was not a day of rest, and as he put it, not a day to take a nap. Thank you, brother Mosher, for reminding us of that point.

—Ron Wallace