

Voice of Baptists

"The Voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." *Isaiah 40:3*

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CONFESS YOUR FAULTS

by Danny Chandler
Belmont, WV

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." (James 5:16) This passage has always had a special importance to those who have heeded its advice and reaped of its benefits. It has a special importance because it bears the truth that all men do indeed have faults and that through confessing and sharing these faults one with another we can gain strength to overcome them. God forbid that I would take any glory away from Christ as the **real** substance of our strength, instead I want to magnify the wisdom of God in commending us into the care of each other in the church.

The letter to the Ephesians has for a central theme the unity of the believers under Christ in the church. The apostle Paul puts forth that very principle at the beginning of the letter when he says "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together **in one** all things in Christ. . ." It is self-evident that there is strength in unity, and the strength of unity is a common ground. The common ground that all who have been saved meet upon is that we have **felt** the condemnation of our sins through the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, and when in that condition of despiration have cried unto God for deliverance. We have then by the grace of God **experienced** the regenerating power of the Spirit in that deliverance. This common ground has been a fundamental principle since Christ established his Church, and has been a practice of true Baptist churches to require a testimony to that effect from all who would unite with the church thru the common door of Baptism. Having entered by one Lord, one faith, one baptism "we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ." (Church Covenant as recorded in Pendletons Baptist Church Manual). It is in the presence of this kind of a relationship that we are exhorted to confess our faults.

The idea of confessing our faults to someone else is very "uncomfortable" to our natural mind, and if we follow that natural mind we will avoid it. But by the convicting power of the Spirit we are brought to a point where we want to be rid of not only the guilt but the very fault itself. It is when we come to this point and let go of our pride that we are able to make confession. It is **not** the confessing that is the key to gaining deliverance, but it is the humble state into which the person is brought by total honesty con-

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RESPECT FOR CHURCH AUTHORITY



Where Did It Go?
by Kenneth W. Massey

"And I will give unto thee (church) the keys of the kingdom of heaven"

Matthew 16:19a

One great change I have witnessed since my boyhood is a deterioration of respect for the authority of a local church. In yesteryears strong men trembled in awe for the power of God's House.

Respect for authority anywhere probably reached an all-time low during the mid-1960's. This was the Vietnam War era, and we shall always remember those on-campus demonstrations held in protest of our involvement. Flags were burned along with draft cards. The general attitude was to question all authority in government, at home, and in our schools and churches. All of a sudden it seemed the minority was recognized as authority. Maybe we didn't need to be in Vietnam. Should we have said it was a mistake and bowed out? One or two mistakes by the authority doesn't give the minority the rule.

We may view the local church in these two ways: 1) a fraternity of God's brotherhood on earth, and 2) an authoritative institution sent by God to bring men to God before they face His final judgment. I refuse to choose one of these and leave the other, but will admit the latter should hold preeminence over the former.

Remember when the wild West was being populated with the white man's migration westward and there were not enough law enforcement agents to police such a vast area. So most men bought some kind of revolver, strapped it to their sides and became sheriff, judge, jury and executioner. This led to much violence and ushered in the time of the "bounty hunter." Most everyone admitted

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ORDINATION

The Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church worshipping at 1032 S. Holmes Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46221, takes this means to extend a general invitation to the churches in the Bethel, Siloam, Southwestern District, and Wiseman Baptist Associations to send their ordained brethren to meet in council on March 30, 1985 at 10 A.M. (Eastern Standard Time) to consider the suitability of ordaining brother Terry Lyles to the full work of the gospel ministry.

Bro. Lyles has been doing mission work in Anchorage, Alaska since July of 1984. He is conducting public Sunday morning worship services in Anchorage at the present time.

Done by order of the church in conference, January 19, 1985.

Dean Hauskins, church clerk
Calvin Perrigo, Moderator

VOICE OF BAPTISTS

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OLD UNION BAPTIST MINISTERS SCHOOL



March 27-29

All ministers are extended a special invitation and welcome to attend three exciting days of instruction and fellowship at the Old Union Baptist Ministers School.

Several outstanding themes have been selected for this year, for example - "Coping with the Ministry," "Exalting Christ in Sermon" and "O, Thou Man of God."

These and other subjects will be presented by Elders H. C. Vanderpool, Howard Taylor, James H. Smith, Jerry Reynolds, Calvin Perrigo and Billy Moran.

If you need additional information and details concerning lodging, etc., please write to C. R. Hayes, 866 Lain Ave., Bowling Green, KY 42101.

This is a grand opportunity to become aware of other churches across our land and to meet other servants of the most high God. You can discuss with them every aspect of the ministry and receive a broader view of God's Kingdom on earth. **MAKE YOUR PLANS TO ATTEND!**

RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

(Continued from first page)

this didn't work out and as a result many innocent men had been killed as a consequence of such little due process of law.

Then, we turned it in the other direction and today there are enough lawyers to hold cat and dog courts. But here comes the sad thing - our attorneys are not always looking for factual evidence but for loopholes in the laws. So the defendant has become so protected by exploiting interpretations of the laws that justice has been lost in the shuffle. We are so concerned with civil rights that we have closed our eyes to civil wrongs. Where did integrity go?

Now, I said those things to say this - the respect for church authority seemed to diminish the same day the courts of our land began looking for flaws in the justice system.

God put His church here. Her laws are perfect because her Lawgiver is perfect. We shall answer to God if we fail to enforce her laws. Did you know that no higher government exists on the face of the earth than that of a local Baptist church. Her acts are binding and civil authorities hold absolutely no power over her.

There are some absolutes we should accept and use as a foundation upon which to build our labors. Man will die. Man cannot live without blood. A supreme Being created all of us. He is Jehovah, the Lord our God. He gave us the Bible - His word. It declares one gospel - the gospel of Jesus Christ. We either believe it or reject it. Some have started another gospel, which is not THE gospel. Only those who believe the gospel of Christ are endowed with grace sufficient to regeneration. This gospel has been entrusted to the church of the living God. She is required to keep the ordinances - Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These ceremonially represent the gospel of our Redeemer. She is responsible for guarding the pulpit and denying any the opportunity to bring another gospel into it. "Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which you have heard, let him be accursed." When one or two members think it should be alright to let their kindred of another faith preach in our pulpits, we must stand by God's word and against our brother. The church has a right and obligation to discipline her members. When she fails, she has disobeyed the commandment of God. Let us take hold of the authority that God has granted to the church and use it for His glory, our power and the conversion of sinners under our influence. **WE NEED TO RECLAIM OUR AUTHORITY!** God gave it to us. I'm not talking about all muscle and no heart. We ought to couple discipline with love. We should speak the truth with love. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (Jn. 14:15)

Did you ever see a person in the church actually enjoy finding the church at fault. That person has little or no regard for church authority. I guess another criminal enjoys seeing a criminal set free more than any other. I love the church established by Jesus Christ during His personal ministry. I have failed the church many times, but she has never failed me. On yes, churches may make mistakes, but you and I will make many more than the church collectively will ever make. If your church makes a mistake in your eye, don't throw it to the wolves. We don't throw ourselves to the wolves when we make a mistake. This is God's pride and joy.

"...and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Matthew 16:19b



DID THE TWELVE APOSTLES CONSTITUTE THE CHURCH?

by W. T. Russell

Let us all lay down pre-conceived opinion and tradition and open the Bible with an open mind and see what it teaches regarding this subject. I am only interested in a 'thus sayeth the Lord', for I verily realize that to advocate something contrary to the teaching of the Book of all books is to be a false teacher. This I do not desire to be.

First I want to introduce some words that are used often in prophesy symbolically. We shall begin with Isaiah 40:4 "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain;" Does this language teach us that as a result of the preaching of John the Baptist the literal mountains would be brought down and the literal hills would be lowered? Does this mean that the crooked roads would be literally straightened and the rough land would be literally smoothed out?

With just a little reason, we are all bound to admit that this is figurative language. If so, what does the word **mountain** symbolize? Mountains in scripture many times are used symbolically to represent earthly governments or kingdoms. **Hills** are used to represent smaller municipalities. **Valleys** are used to represent the lowly and degraded. In fact, John's mission was to make a highway for the Lord. Therefore, this figurative language can be expressed in one word, 'Grading'. So the work of John the Baptist was compared to the grading of a highway, in which the valleys were filled, the mountain and hills are pulled down and the rough places are

made plain. This was to be accomplished by the preaching of the gospel by John.

Now let us consider the prophecies relative to the setting up of the church: Isaiah 2:2 "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the **mountain** of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the **mountains**, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." v. 3. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the **mountain** of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of this ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Notice that verse 2 says, "the **mountain** of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains." Now if **mountain** of the Lord's house means government or the Lord's house, and it most certainly does or else it means that the, Lord's House is a literal mountain, then "Top of the mountains" means on the top of our above all governments or kingdoms.

In Micah 4:1 the prophet makes it clear that mountain is the government of the house of the Lord. "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the **mountain** of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it."

Some try to harmonize the incident of Luke 6 with the above scriptures, but it will be noticed that Luke 6 tells us that "he went out **into a mountain** to pray and continued all night in prayer to God." v.12 Does this say that Jesus went up on the top of the mountains? One can go into the hills and never reach the top of them.

Someone will say, what about Psalms 72:16? "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth."

This alludes to the very same thing as the above, that top of the mountains means 'on top of or above all governments'. Contrary to the opinion of many, 'handful' in this verse comes from the Hebrew word 'pishah' which means—superabundance. (Young's Concordance)

So the correct rendering of this is, There shall be a superabundance of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains. So what do we understand from this language? "There shall be a superabundance of seed (children of faith) here on earth in an organized capacity above all organized governments or kingdoms, the fruit of which shall shake, wave or rustle like the rustling of the foliage of the trees and fields of Lebanon, and they of the city (church) shall flourish (grow and prosper) like grass of the earth."

Does this not rule out the idea that the

prophets prophesied that the church would be established on the top of a literal mountain? To me there is no basis whatever to believe such a thing. If you will notice the prophets always say, "in the top of the mountains" and not in the top of a mountain. This is one thing that caused me to make a more comprehensive study of this subject.

Now we shall establish by the Bible that Jesus had set up his church before the incident in Luke 6.

We shall use Mark 1:14, 15 "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, **The time is fulfilled**, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the gospel."

Did Jesus tell the truth when he said, "the time is fulfilled"? Some may say, Lord it is not fulfilled yet you must wait a little while, but let me take the Bible.

Now just what does the next verse say? "Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. v. 17. And Jesus said unto them come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. v. 18. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. v. 19. And when he had gone a little farther thence he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. v. 20. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him."

Now it is my contention that these scriptures teach us that Jesus is here gathering his church together. John the Baptist was sent to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. If he did what he was sent to do, the material was as completely prepared for the church as the material prepared by Hiram of Tyre for the building of King Solomon's Temple. There was nothing to do to the material but bring it together, and here we see Jesus calling that material prepared by John together. It is very plain to me that the gathering of the church was a progressive work, beginning with Mark 1:15.

There was a break in the report of Mark after the calling of the first four disciples but in Mark 2:14 we have the calling of Matthew who followed Christ.

Hear D. B. Ray, Author of Baptist Succession, P. 204 "When was the kingdom set up? - We answer, that the setting up of the kingdom, with its laws and ordinances, was not an instantaneous, but a gradual work. John prepared materials for the setting up of the kingdom, but Jesus Christ, soon after his own baptism in the river Jordan, chose the twelve apostles who were the first members of the organization known as the church."

To this I heartily agree. The twelve who were later chosen from among the other mem-

WANTED

Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, 879 Orchard Street, Toledo, Ohio has been without a pastor since Elder Darrell Hicks resigned at the end of August, 1984. Anyone desiring an appointment can contact Bro. Bethel Green, 4137 Asbury Drive, Toledo, Ohio 43612, Telephone (419) 476-7075.

BIBLE STUDY

West End Baptist Church in Gallatin, Tennessee is hosting another winter Bible Study, being conducted as always by Elder W. T. Russell.

These studies are conducted each Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. and will continue through March 14, 1985.

Everyone is invited to attend!

FELLOWSHIP MEETING

South Carthage Baptist Church of South Carthage, Tennessee will host a Fellowship Meeting of all the Baptist churches in Smith County and other areas Saturday evening, March 16, 1985 at 7:00 p.m.

Elder Kenneth Massey is invited to preach. Elder W.R. Overton and all the members send a welcome for everyone to attend.

members of the church, were the first members. But these twelve were members of the church first as disciples, and were selected from other members of the church and were ordained or appointed to the office of apostle as recorded in Luke 6.

Let us look to Luke 6:17 and see three distinct group "And he came down **with them** (the ordained apostles) and the **company** of his disciples, (other members of the church) and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem," (spectators)

Now look at Mark 2:18 just following the calling of the disciples by the Lord and see whether or not Jesus recognized them as his church. "And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast; and they come and say unto him, why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? v. 19. "And Jesus said unto them, Can the **children of the bridechamber** fast, while the bridegroom is with them?" As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast." v. 20. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days."

Who are the children of the
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CONFESS FAULTS

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cerning his faults. Through absolute honesty pride is removed, and humility takes its place. If there is anything that can humble a man, it is a good look at his own deplorable condition.

When a person is able to see his sin for what it really is, and how that he is a slave to that sin as long as he yields to it, then and only then will he seek to be healed. It is at this point that the strength of unity is so important. When those brothers and sisters who have been down the same road and experienced many of the same faults are able to encourage the one who is weak, it makes that weak brother much stronger. Jesus was very much aware of our need to be strengthened "against" our faults and that is why there is so much emphasis in the Bible on helping those who are weak in the faith and do not forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

The Christian people have taught now for some nineteen hundred and fifty years that the way to deliverance from sin is through humbleness and self-abasement. The world has scoffed at and rejected these teachings as "not necessary" and have tried every type false religion imaginable to avoid these undesirable conditions. Many of these same people who reject humbleness and humility as necessary to salvation, will turn right around and use them as a means of deliverance from their uncontrollable habits. Alcoholics Anonymous, Weight Watchers, and many local drug rehabilitation programs are successful because of the principles of total honesty and self-abasement that they employ. Some may ask how humility is involved in these programs. Well, you stand up in front of a group of people and admit that you are a drug addict, and tell how it has ruined your life and the lives of those you love. Let the shame of the sordid details consume you as you recount them to the listeners. Tell them you are a slave to your habit, that you can't control it, and that you need help. I'm sure that when you can do this in complete honesty, you'll be humble. Their strength is in their unity, because they have all been down the same road.

It is a sad fact that most of the world sees the "Church" (if they see it at all) as some mystical, universal, unorganized body that never meets, and has no practical value to those that are in it. But we, whom God has saved (on common grounds and placed into the church (a local action group), see much practical value in a unified effort to overcome our faults and to present to a needy world the way of deliverance from their sins.

I want to plead with each of you to use this God given means of strength to defeat our adversary, the Devil. If you want to see a real revival, and the strong holds of Satan

torn down. Just let a few people start "fessing up" and see how it spreads. Pretty soon you'll have a revival you can't contain, and there will be deliverance from sin like you never thought possible. God once told Israel (and I'm sure it applies to us too) "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land. (II Chron. 7:14)

Did The Twelve Apostles

(Continued from page 3)

bridechamber? The Bride of course. So Jesus regarded the called-out as the Church. This was prior to incident of Luke 6.

Now please look at Acts 1:21, "Wherefore of these men which have **companied** with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Note-These men selected were in the company, (the church) which **company** began after the baptism of Jesus by John in Jordan. Mark 1:9

See also Acts 1:12, "Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey." Who were the 'they'? "And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room where abode both Peter, and James and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the Son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James." It is plain that the 'they' was not the twelve but evidently other members of the church. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brethren. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about a hundred and twenty). This teaches us that there were about 120 members of the church gathered here but it does not teach us that this was all of the members of the church.

I Cor. 15:6 tells us that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.

If this is not enough let us go to Luke 24:12, 13. "Then arose Peter and ran unto the sepulchre: and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves and departed wondering in himself at that which was come to pass. And behold, **two of them** went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs."

Who were the **two of them**? They were not the apostles. In verse 18 we learn that the name of one of them was Cleopas, and in verse 22 we are told that they were of the company (the church) "And certain women also of **company** made us astonished which

were early at the sepulchre." We know that these two disciples were chosen witnesses, therefore members of the church; for Peter said in Acts 10:40, 41 "Him God raised up the third day and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses **chosen before of God**, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead."

In Matt. 10:1 we read about Christ sending out the twelve, and in Luke 10:1 the Lord appointed other seventy and sent them out. Would anyone be bold enough in the face of scripture to say these were not members of the church? It was certainly before the commission was given to all the world.

John the Baptist was sent to prepare material to put up the church, but we read in John 4:1 "Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not but his disciples.)

Christ sent out the twelve as well as the seventy to make disciples, so when they were made and baptized by the authority of the Head of the church, Christ, Would you consider them members of the church or baptized and turned loose. Jesus was not a General Baptist.

It is said that if the Apostles did not constitute the church, then the ordinances was not given to the church.

It so happens that the ordinances were delivered to the apostles in their official and representative capacity and they were to deliver them to the churches.

See I Cor. 11:2 "Now I praise you brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you."

Now if the ordinances were delivered to the apostles as the church, then the apostles as such were given the commission as well as the Lord's Supper, therefore when the office of apostle ceased, then the ordinances ceased.

It is said that Matt. 12:28 has reference to the setting of members in the church. Let us see by placing the word members just before those set in. And God hath set some in the church, first members apostles, second members prophets, third members teachers, after that, next members helps, next members governments, next members diversities of tongues. Even to interpret it this way that there were more than 12 members in the church, for all went in before Pentecost. All the rest were in the church before that day.

Now I want to show you that Matt. 12:28 has direct reference to gifts bestowed upon the church. Paul in I Cor. 12:27 simply told the church at Corinth that they were at that time the body of Christ, and members in particular. He told them this after explaining in the preceding verses that they being many members, not all having the same office, were one body in Christ.

(Continued next month)