

## People are Funny

Isn't it strange that people will become offended at the statement of a simple truth? Many become offended when a preacher states that one cannot find the names of denominational churches in the Bible. Why? Is it not the truth? Do they want the preacher to tell a lie?

Most members of denominations know denominations "are not mentioned in the Bible, yet they are content to stay in them. This is strange too. How do they figure they are following the Bible? The Bible reveals to us church Jesus built, which is His bride, for which He died. Jesus adds all the saved to it. **(Acts 2:47)** Yet they choose to be members of denominations built by men, and which are not mentioned in the Bible! I confess that it is strange to me how they think they are following the Bible.

It is strange the people say there is nothing in a name. They know the New Testament church always had the name of God or Christ attached (if any name was attached); never any man's name. But now they say the name has nothing to do in identifying the New Testament church. Suppose one who is a member of the Baptist church in Texas should go to England on a visit. There he begins to look for his church. Suppose

By Garner S. Hall

he visits every church in the country and not one has the Baptist name attached to it. What would he conclude? He would decide that his church was not in England.

Suppose one who never heard of the great system of denominations in the world should be given a Bible and instructed to follow it. He has never heard of the Bible, never heard of any church. First he reads the Bible, then starts out to find the church it teaches. He asks no questions of others. He merely follows the Bible. If he should come to a church with a sign "First Baptist Church" would he have any idea he had found the church his book called for? Would he take so much as a second look at a church with the sign "First Presbyterian Church" or one "First Methodist Church"?

"I am come in my Fathers name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, who receive glory one of another, and the glory that cometh from the only God ye seek not." **(John 5:43, 44.)**

I implore you to turn your ears from thoughtless popular assertions and let God's word lead.



Sick			
Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Lori Holloway	Chick Wade	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)	Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle)
Amber Moseley (Toni Herd's niece)	Grandparents of Mary Ann Roberts	Easton Alexander (Phillip Box's cousin's baby)	Jerry Sandlin (Megan Lee's Grandfather)
Richard Call Seth Humphrey's Uncle	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)	Mary Smith (Nathan Smith's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Dale Herd (William Herd's brother)	Larry Alexander (Friend of Phillip Box)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Frank Johnson (Debbi Coleman's Uncle)	Dale Wilkes (William Herd's Uncle)	

### July Birthdays

- 3 - Nathan Rouse
- 11 - Madi White
- 12 - Aurie Adams
- 15 - Bradley Seymour
- 16 - Nathan Smith
- 23 - Drew Haley Smith
- 25 - Yvette Rouse

### News and Notes

- We begin a new quarter today.
- Let us remember Matthew Johnson, David Golden and Tim Morton in our prayers as they are deployed overseas.
- Let us remember Jared Burton and Chris Davis as they undergo treatments.
- Let us remember our expectant mothers in our prayers: Anne Morton and Jana Hall.
- There is a meeting at the Prattmont church July 10-15, Sun.—Fri.
- We are expecting a very large number of new students this fall! Lets be praying and preparing to do our part in the church here.

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# The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **(Matthew 5:16)**

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## There Must Needs be Heresies

By Ed Harrell



### Thoughts to Ponder

Renew the courage that prevails,  
The steady faith that never fails,  
And makes us stand in every fight  
Firm as a fortress to defend the right.

After a few weeks study at St. John's University and Abbey, I am impressed by the perceptive Roman Catholic analysis of the weaknesses of Protestantism. They insist that Protestants are pressed between two unacceptable extremes. One extreme grows out of the assumption that man has an individual obligation to judge Bible truth. As a result, "a principle of disunity is embedded in the very essence of Protestantism." On the other hand, in order to escape this evil, Protestants are guilty of hacking away at the body of essential truth of Christianity until they "sap it of all conviction." (What Price Unity? America, May 5, 1945, p. 95).

The renewed interest in "unity" movements in the church today stems, I believe, from the same mentality. It is a mind which has lost its spiritual toughness, which can no longer tolerate the consequences of a belief in individually perceived religious truth.

strikes me that there is a lesson for Christians to learn by examining the apparent incompatibility of truth and unity. The core truth of the lesson is that a belief in individual responsibility means one also believes in division. I unabashedly accept that conclusion. Protestantism, as a system of human religion supposedly reflecting the wisdom of good men, is indeed vulnerable to the taunts of Rome. Protestants ought to be ashamed that they can do no better. But Christians should understand that a rigorous search for truth necessitates that "there must be also heresies among you." **(1 Cor. 11:19)**

The Bible clearly teaches that division serves a useful and necessary function in the church. The acceptance of unity

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**Do You Have a Bible Question?**  
Call (334) 734-2133 or  
E-mail:  
LarryRouse@aubeacon.com



### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class ..... 9:30 AM  
Worship ..... 10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday

Bible Classes..... 7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse  
Evangelist and Editor

Of course, Catholics are not so perceptive in analyzing the appalling consequences of their own alternative to the Protestant dilemma. It hardly seems an improvement when one is asked to swallow a body of divine truth rooted in historical corruption, Biblical ignorance, and the intellectual intolerance of the Roman Catholic tradition. A Roman Catholic does indeed have his own certified brand of truth and unity, but he pays a staggering price.

But what of the Protestant predicament? I am not a Protestant, but it

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at any price will eventually "leaven" the whole body — such unity levels all to the lowest common denominator. **(1 Cor. 5:6-7)** Division is necessary so that "they which are approved may be made manifest among you." **(1 Cor. 11:19)** If the only vestige of the true church that existed today was the liberal Christian churches, I believe it would be impossible to distinguish the church of the Lord from every other form of religion. In the same way, if there is to be a church of Christ in another fifty years, it will be in the conservative churches today. Whatever might be the intention and hopes of many of those associated with liberal churches of Christ, it seems historically absurd to believe that after one or two more generations these churches will offer a distinctive alternative to the chaos of Protestantism. Finally, division is necessary to preserve the peace and sanity of the kingdom. (Rom. 14:1). A group united in the "same mind and the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10) — and only such a group — can take to the world a message of hope and peace.

This is not to say that division is good in any absolute sense. It quite obviously is not, and Jesus prayed fervently that his disciples would be one. **(Jn 17:11)** He made it quite clear that Christian division would be a source of confusion to those who were not disciples. But if religious unity among all men of good will is desirable, the Bible never intimates that it is a practical end to be expected by Christians in history.

It is true that a Christian is obliged to work with both a love of the truth and a desire for unity. It is true also that Romans 14 teaches that under some circumstances two can walk together who do not agree and that a Christian is always ready to engage in dialogue about what is "essential" as a basis for doctrinal unity. There is no easy formula which answers all of the questions one must face in a lifetime. A Christian will take the issues one at a time, day by day, person by person, and weigh the respective tugs of truth and unity.

One could miss the central truth in this lesson, however, by gagging over the unpleasant day to day confrontations which arise. Practical problems should never obscure the very real Bible principle

that truth is divisive. Again and again, those who start with a commitment to truth become weary along the endless trek through barren deserts of debate, bickering, and Biblical legalism and opt for peace and unity. Some become too sweet-spirited to stomach the bitterness that is a part of division.

Some become tired of the long and tedious discussions of seemingly trivial subjects. Some long for the enlightened company of those who do not honor the truth. Some become exasperated by their human inability to find a final resting place, to fight the last battle and lay their armor down. They retreat in dismay. So many are overwhelmed by the responsibility for division which every man shoulders when he picks up his Bible to read it as the literal and comprehensible word of God.

Over and over again in the history of Christianity the weary have dejectedly begun the long and fruitless journey toward compromise and unity. In the minds of nineteenth-century Disciples of Christ, the quest for peace came quickly and logically to exclude the concept of the "restoration" of true religion. The renewed interest in "unity" movements in the church today stems, I believe, from the same mentality. It is a mind which has lost its spiritual toughness, which can no longer tolerate the consequences of a belief in individually perceived religious truth. Although we tend to see all of our differences in terms of case studies the ever present and argumentative "what would you do if" — they are generally, I believe, much more a matter of mood. Some come to love too much the sweet fruits of unity and to hate unreasonably the purifying exhilaration of strife. One who feels in mortal danger on one horn of the dilemma proposed by Roman Catholics is likely to be gored by the other.

I am not ashamed to admit that my teaching is divisive. Jesus came with a sword. I have helped to divide churches; I expect to divide more. I have also helped to unite churches that were needlessly and shamefully divided. Unity is wonderful in the truth of God; division is needed when the truth is at stake. It would be more comfortable if the dilemma were not there — but it is. We must live life as it is. If you have deep convictions, you must be prepared for careful, courteous, certain confrontation.



## BIG May not be BETTER

By Hiram Hutto

Have you ever noticed how many people have "The Tower of Babel Complex?" Remember the tower of Babel? These people said, "Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name" **(Gen. 11:4)**. Evidently they thought, "the bigger the better" or, the way to be really somebody is to do big things in big ways. Many people are of that same disposition. They are not anybody, in their estimation, unless they can "see their name up in lights," unless they have "the most" of whatever it is. Thus, the almost insatiable desire to "get to the top"—wherever that is.

In direct opposition to this, have you ever noticed how, according to the teaching of Jesus, greatness is not necessarily in doing the "big" things, but rather in the small things; and with Him and His people, the way up is the way down. This is just one of the many ways in which the kingdom of Christ is "not of this world," that is, its standard of greatness is not the same as the world's standard. Let's notice some of these.

**1. Recognition:** How many people in Germany or Russia, or France, or England have ever heard of you? Probably none, if you are like most of us. Is this of any consequence? No, for God assures us that if we are of those who belong to God, "ye are of more value than many sparrows" **(Matt. 10:31)** and although "two sparrows are sold for a farthing," not "one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father." If God is concerned about the little sparrows, surely he is concerned about his people. The people in France, Germany, or wherever may not have ever heard of us, but God has.

In direct opposition to this, have you ever noticed how, according to the teaching of Jesus, greatness is not necessarily in doing the "big" things; and with Him and His people, the way up is the way down.

**2. Prominence.** There are not many who will read this bulletin whose deeds will be acclaimed by men. You won't get your name in the newspaper for some worthwhile activity. Chances are you will not be receiving any medals. Yet remember, Jesus said, "whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" **(Matt. 10:42)**. The world may never recognize you as a "hero", but God does even when you do a thing that little. Why then should we be concerned so much about what the world thinks of us?

**3. Big Men.** No doubt you have observed how the world almost goes wild over the movie star or the TV personality. The autograph-seekers almost drive them mad. And I even heard of a middle-aged woman who was a member of the church trekking all the way to Memphis when Elvis died. (I wonder if the same would be willing to go across town to visit a neighboring congregation engaged in a gospel meeting?). Yet God is not impressed with all that, nor does He want us to be. Listen: "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate" **Rom. 12: 16**. Perhaps it is especially appropriate that the next words are "Be not wise in your own conceits". But does this not at the same time tell us the very ones whom we should honor? What if Elvis, or whoever, "plays to audiences of thousands?" God takes no favorable recognition of such. He is concerned about people who do His will, and those who do are "precious in his sight", no matter how insignificant they may seem to be.

