“WHY HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?”

Richard Guill

These words were spoken by Elijah to Israel long ago as he challenged them to make up their minds whether the Lord is God, or Baal (I Kings 18:21). To halt between two opinions is to fail to make up one’s mind, to make a decision, to pick one thing over another. It has been a problem with God’s people through the ages and continues to be. Let us suggest two situations when congregations of God’s people should not halt between two opinions, but make up their mind and choose the right thing.

FIRST, “why halt ye between two opinions?” If denominations are right, why not join them instead of trying to hold on to the one true church and fellowship the denominations, or trying to turn the Lord’s church into a denomination? There is no ground for compromise here. Jesus said, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad” (Matthew 12:30). There are currently a number of congregations that are between two opinions. They want to be recognized as faithful congregations of the Lord’s church, but they cast a covetous eye at other congregations, led by preachers who are so obsessed with making a name for themselves that have become nothing more than a denomination and are filling their buildings with unconverted members. To such fence-straddling congregations I say, “Why halt ye between two opinions?”

If you want to be like them and the denominations, go ahead and do so, but if you still believe the Lord’s church is the one and only true church, then proudly take your stand against all such departures from the truth and stop fellowshipping such preachers and congregations and repent for having done so.

SECOND, “why halt ye between two opinions” regarding how to treat false teachers? If you believe that you can fellowship them in their activities and still please God, then do so wholeheartedly. But if you know that the Bible says you must “mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them” (Romans 16:17), and if they “come unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (II John 10, 11), then stop trying to be on both sides. There is a clearly seen apostasy in the Lord’s church today due to such false teachers. Many need to make up their minds which side they are going to choose. If you continue to fellowship those who are teachers of false doctrine, those who are faithful to the Lord will count you as being of a like mind and put you in the false teacher’s camp. When such happens, do not moan and complain that someone has “misjudged” you. God is the one who says that you become a partaker of his evil deeds! If you are going to get mad, get mad at God. Rather than doing so, why not admit your error, repent of it, and seek the forgiveness of both God and your fellow Christians? Your soul and the souls of precious ones you will influence are at stake.
There is no doubt about this conclusion, because they have made their intents clear. In the May 8, 1880, issue of “Mind and Matter” they say the following: If Christianity lives, Spiritualism must die; and if spiritualism is to live, Christianity must die. They are the antithesis of each other. These people mean for Christianity to die and for it to be replaced by the world religion of the occult.

If some of you are already shocked by the information that you have read, then you had better hold on to your hats, because “you ain’t seen nothing yet”! This plot is so unbelievable that the fact that it is so unbelievable has served to hide it from the populace in general.

We must, while there is still a chance to turn things around, become informed and open our minds to what is really going on. These articles present the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, but I would encourage you not to take my word for it, but do your own research.

Finally, in this issue you will read a wonderful statement from a faithful gospel preacher along with his excellent article. Things are happening in the brotherhood, and brother Scully underscores those changes. Brethren who love truth are beginning to rise up and cut themselves off from the terrible people and institutions who are now controlling the brotherhood. These people and institutions have been successful in cloaking their real goals and motives by claiming that they are sound in the faith. Events beyond their control have now exposed their duplicity for all to see. While claiming loyalty to God and the Bible, they have demonstrated that their real loyalty was to themselves and to their institutions. They are like the crooked politicians who now run our country. The church, America and the world are in terrible shape because we have abandoned God and the Bible and followed men and institutions. We should have never believed in those men and those institutions. Our belief and trust must always be locked into the Bible and the church. We are so thankful for brother Scully, who is now part of a “new” restoration movement.
WE DID IT “TO” OURSELVES
Johnny Burkhart

On September 18, 2008, at two o’clock in the afternoon the Chairman of the Federal Reserve and the Secretary of the Treasury went to the White House, and to Capitol Hill and told the leaders of our Government that our economy, and the world economy was about to melt down. How could that happen? How could something that our enemies: the Kremlin, Al-Qaida, the Nazis, the Japanese could never do; how could this happen? The simple answer: “We did it to ourselves”—America is being destroyed from within.

Parenthetically, again and again God’s people have had to deal with the problem of “within.” When Israel lost the battle at Ai and 36 men lost their lives, the reason: a problem from “within” (Joshua 7:13). The book of Judges deals with dark days in Israel’s history. The book tells of the gloomy story of social chaos, disobedience to God, oppression, deliverance and apostasy. One key verse in the book is Judges 21:25, “In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” The enemies of Israel could not defeat them, but because of their own transgressions they destroyed themselves and fell into captivity.

In Numbers 32, as Israel was preparing to possess the “Promised land,” the tribes of Reuben and Gad had other plans. They did not want to fight for the land of Canaan (Numbers 32:5, 19). They were content in living in the land on the east side of the Jordan River. They evidently just wanted to keep peace, relax, and not get involved with the fight. However, Moses demanded they get involved and do their part. Moreover, there are biblical principles that teach there is a time when one must fight (II Timothy 4:7, 8).

Brethren, the time to fight the good fight of faith is now! False teachers have always plagued God’s people. However, today there is a twist to this age-old problem. Jesus graphically illustrated it in Matthew 23:2, when He identified the hypocrisy of those who say (teach) and do not (practice). Many who gallantly taught Truth in days gone by continue to do so, but the issue comes with the failure to practice. This failure is evidenced by their fellowship and support of known false teachers. This fellowship comes in the form of speaking on lectures or television programs with them, promoting and raising money for them, and joining hands with them in a multitude of ways. Yes, it is relatively easy for God’s people to wholeheartedly stand against the vices of the world (gambling, beverage alcohol, immorality, etc.). Yet, it can be a daunting task to oppose those whom in the past have firmly upheld the Truth. This failure to stand and oppose all error, regardless of who may be promoting it, facilitates the church’s destruction from within. Shall we sit idly by and allow this to happen in the same way our nation sat by and allowed law makers, CEOs and others to destroy our economy from within? God forbid!

There was a time when one could have lived a secluded life. You may have lived many miles off the beaten path and did not have a whole lot of contact with the world generally, and the brethren specifically. That is not the world we live in. With regard to this “new twist” of fellowship and support of false teachers, many articles have been written, entire lectureships have been devoted to these matters, sermons have been preached, and no doubt hundreds of conversations have been had. Yet, by and large, the majority in the Lord’s church gives a simple shrug of the shoulders to this current issue destroying the Lord’s people. Moreover, this lackadaisical attitude creates the environment for the church to be destroyed from within. The damage these supporters of error are doing is far greater than all the gambling casinos, liquor stores and houses of prostitution combined. Incredibly, in many places the Lord’s church is being destroyed and we have allowed it to happen to ourselves! Paul was right on target when he said, “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:29, 30). In the Old Testament era, as well as in New Testament times, there was the danger of God’s people drifting away. That very reality gives insight to what is happening among God’s people in many places now. We are ready at a moment’s notice to stand against the wickedness of the world (as we should), but when it comes to standing against notable, well liked preachers of the day, who by their silence support error and false teachers, that is a different matter.

This attitude is brought about, to a large degree, by an unrealistic allegiance to people and/or schools. It is the idea that these are people/schools that we love, admire and respect. They have been lovers of Truth so long they could not possibly be caught up in error. After all, years ago we attended these schools or our children
attended them, hence, we are speaking of those who are extremely intelligent and highly educated. Somehow or another we have the mind-set these people/schools are always going to teach Truth. That is exactly what was happening at Corinth; some were following Paul, others Cephas or Apollos. Paul said, “Be followers of me as I follow Christ” (I Corinthians 11:1). When we start thinking about why people can be led away from the Lord and His church, and you trace back through history, you find a lot of it comes about because people put too much confidence in men. They take their eyes off the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Then there are the “perverse things” (Acts 20:30). Perverse means to twist or distort. Here is the problem. There are those who say: “Taking a stand on certain matters (i.e. support of certain known false teachers) is not worth dividing the brotherhood over [their words].” Their support of false teachers is often done subtly. It is done with the weaving together of a comment made in a lecture, or a statement from an article, or something someone said in a phone conversation, or a personal conversation, then that is mixed together with just enough truth which causes many to believe their distortion and perversion of “the matter.” Brethren, is not the church Jesus shed His precious blood to purchase worth the fight? Have we become the modern day tribes of Reuben and Gad who want peace at any price? Are we willing to just sit by and allow others to be on the front line to absorb the critical barbs, putdowns, laughter and attacks of those not willing to fight for Truth (because of money or some political alliance or friends), but are always ready to belittle those who are in the fight.

Sadly, many are more concerned with going to the brotherhood lectureships to see their “ole buddies” than they are with the appearance of a noted false speaker on that same lectureship. Many seemingly are more concerned about “being a good-ole-boy,” and staying in close contact with certain men and schools (because one day they might be looking for another place to preach and heaven forbid they do not have the recommendation of some “big-name” preacher) than they are defending Truth at any price. There are many sitting in the pews who would never attend a gambling casino, drink alcohol, or miss a worship service; yet they will sit idly by, and give a shrug of the shoulders to supporters of false teachers because in the past these men, well, “they have been mighty good men.”

In September of 2008, our economy took a nosedive and we are still reeling from the problems, which were from within, and most of us never had a clue it was coming. The Lord’s church is facing the greatest challenge it has ever faced in my lifetime. The Lord’s church is being destroyed from within, yet the majority sits on the sidelines and is swept away into supporting damnable doctrines. Let us ever fight for Truth with the determination that we will obey every command and oppose every false doctrine. Let us resolve never to destroy ourselves from within. With God’s Word we shall stand and withstand to God’s glory.

I am writing this to thank all of those involved with Unity In Truth (UIT). Had it not been for your courage to stand up for the truth of the gospel when so many others have forsaken the Holy Writ, I am not sure where I and others like me would be. Though the paper, hence the cause of Christ, has come under great attack from those who would have the brotherhood to believe that men like Gilbert Gough and Richard Guill are insane extremists, it should be noted that these men teach what they always have, and stand where they always have, though the same cannot be said for so many others who shamelessly profess soundness in the faith.

Many are they who compromise truth for the sake of notoriety, popularity and money to support their school or building project. Yet, I am thankful that the men at UIT have not so much as considered wavering, and have even become the outcast with so many circles in the brotherhood because of their refusal to compromise where God has not. Well, it is better to be cast away by men, than cast away by God. These men have been an inspiration to me, my family and the congregation with whom I labor in Morgan City, LA. It is our prayer that UIT will continue to “fight the good fight of the faith,” being “set for the defense of the gospel,” unapologetic and unashamed. Please support this good work, and if you are also sickened by the current state of the brotherhood, which is filled with men “who love the praise of man more than the praise of God,” then by all means, speak up and stand accountable before it is everlastingly too late.

Without Apology,
Roger A. Scully Jr.
In the early days of the children of Israel we find two great, strong leaders: Moses and Joshua. Both of these men commanded respect from the Israelites, and though they were not perfect, both led in an excellent fashion. Both of these leaders challenged the people to be faithful and loyal to the Lord, and the people were.

We all remember that great charge that Joshua gave at the end of his life, “Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15). Hearing those words the people responded, “God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods” (24:16). As a constant reminded, Joshua said, “If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after then he hath done you good” (24:20). Again, the people affirmed, “we will serve the Lord” (24:21). Joshua lived to be 110 years old. “And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel” (24:31). One thing that kept this generation true and faithful to the Lord was that they knew what the Lord had done. They knew how He had brought their fathers out of the house of bondage. They knew how He had provided for them and their fathers while they were traveling through the wilderness. They knew how He had protected them as they conquered the land of Canaan. There is a sad commentary concerning the children of Israel in Judges two verse eleven: “There arose another generation after them, which knew not the lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.”

The question that we would pose is why did they not know? Since they were another generation they had not been eyewitnesses to all the events that had transpired in the life of Israel’s children. They were not there when Moses led the children out of Egypt. They had not been present at Mt. Sinai when God gave the Ten Commandments. They had not been present to feast on the quail and manna, nor drink the water from the rock. They had not witnessed the soles of their shoes not wearing out. They had not crossed through the Red Sea or the Jordan River on dry land. Neither had these wonderful events been taught to them and impressed upon their minds. Since their fathers had failed to teach them about God and the history of His people, “The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim” (Judges 2:11). “They forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtaroth” (Judges 2:13). Because of a lack of teaching, Israel proves that one untaught generation leads to total apostasy.

As elders, preachers, and Bible class teachers we have a unique responsibility to teach our congregation and our children about God and His word lest we raise up another generation that knows not God. Paul told Timothy to “Preach the Word” (II Timothy 4:2). Paul told the Ephesian elders, “For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Act 20:27). If the children of Israel had been taught about God’s protection and His providing for His people, they may have remained true to Him rather than going off into apostasy. I am afraid today we are becoming much like the children of Israel in that we are failing to teach our children the pure message of God. Many of our children come to worship and Bible Study and never even bring a Bible. Many of our Bible class periods are spent doing so many other things that we have little time, if any at all, for real Bible study.

In many schools today, our children are taught the “theory of evolution” as if it were a fact, and the fact of God creating the world is either totally ignored or mocked and ridiculed. If the church does not teach our children about the true nature of creation how are they going to learn it? When one begins to accept even the theistic evolution position they have compromised the very teaching of the Word of God. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Neither Darwin, his followers, nor any other man can change that fact of history. We must teach the true source of all things. If we fail to do so, we will raise up a generation that knows not how this world really came into existence.

Today in many congregations you seldom hear sermons concerning the proper items of worship, maybe this is true because some are desiring to do things other than what is authorized for Christian worship. If people had constantly been taught the sinfulness of having an instrument of music in worship, people would not want to
add an instrument. If people were taught that congregational singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) was the only type of music authorized for worship, then the faithful would not accept quartets, choirs, and the like. If people had been taught the Biblical role of women in the church, you would not read of them leading in prayer, waiting on the Lord’s Table, serving as translators, etc. Allow one generation go without knowing the truth of the Word of God, and they will follow their own desires rather than the desires of God.

We have problems in many congregations today concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage. Because there are so many couples who are living in unscriptural marriages, it is easier to say nothing rather than exposing the sinfulness of their lives. God’s Word says, “Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Matthew 19:9). We need to teach our children to be very selective while searching for a mate. Not everyone who desires to marry is able to marry with the approval of God. If one marries a person who has put away a companion other than for the cause of fornication, they have entered into an adulterous marriage; and yes, one can live in sin (Romans 6:1, 2). To live in that marriage, and to die while in that marriage will cause both parties to lose their soul. If this basic principle of a Christian home is not taught we will raise up a generation that knows not the will of God, and our churches will be filled with adulterous marriages.

In many congregation today there are those who have failed to understand that there is a difference between the Lord’s church and the denominations of the world. We see our friends and neighbors being very active in their churches. We can accept that they are sincere and devout, but ignorant of God’s Word. The Lord only has one church (Ephesians 4:4; 1:22, 23). The denominations all over town are not the church of the Bible. Parents should not allow their children to be attending the denominational church. God told Israel to destroy the idols of worship of the heathen nations, destroy the groves and pull down the high places, lest their children want to learn more about them. The very presence of these idols would be a stumbling block to the children of Israel. When we allow our children to participate in the program at the denominational church we are telling them, without saying a word, that the denomination is acceptable to God. Many young people have left the Lord’s church and joined some man-made church because it was more entertaining and more appealing to them, without ever considering if it were acceptable to God. One untaught generation led Israel astray and one untaught generation will destroy the Lord’s church too.

Paul said, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning…” (Romans 15:4). When we forget or fail to teach the next generation the truths of the Word of God the church is doomed for failure. We cannot allow such to happen. Parents must bring up their children in the “admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). Elders must “feed the flock of God which is among you” (1 Peter 5:2). Then, and only then, can we reverse this apostasy that is destroying the precious bride of Christ.

THOUGHTS ON THE GRIDER/YOUNG ARTICLE

Roger Scully

In the February 10, 2009 issue of The Forest Hill News, edited by Barry Grider and under the oversight of the Forest Hill elders, who also oversee the Memphis School of Preaching (MSOP), there appeared an article written by Tyler Young entitled: Binding Where God Has Not. As an Editor’s note under the heading of the article was the statement, “The following article is an excerpt of material prepared by brother Young for the 2008 Lubbock Lectureship.” The director of the Lubbock lectureship is Tommy Hicks. After reading the article, I went to OABS website to listen to it, but noticed that it was not available. This stirred my curiosity and led me to more research which revealed that the reason Grider said the material was prepared for, but not published in, the lectureship book was because Hicks refused to print the material as being unscriptural. Yet, Young was allowed to speak, and presented the material, causing the elders to remove his audio from their site. The following are some thoughts as relating to the article and fellowship dilemma of those involved with MSOP.

My first thought when reading the article and learning that Tommy Hicks refused to publish the material was: What message is Grider sending to Hicks, and how will Hicks respond? Well, those questions have been answered. Hicks and Grider spoke together on the November 2009 Schertz lectureship, and Hicks has agreed
to speak on the 2010 MSOP lectureship in March. In addition Hicks invited several of the staff of MSOP to speak on the October 2009 Lubbock lectureship. Consider this rationally if you will: Hicks thought the Young material to be biblically unsound; hence refused to publish it in the Schertz Lectureship book, but allowed Young to speak on the program, granted Young would not teach the material that Hicks concluded to be unscriptural. Young spoke on the lectureship and did indeed teach what Hicks asked him not to teach, causing the Schertz elders to remove Young’s audio from their website. Despite this, Grider publishes the Young material, showing his endorsement of it, yet Hicks speaks with Grider on the next Schertz lectureship and accepts the invitation from MSOP to speak on their lectureship, and invited several of the MSOP faculty to speak on the lectureship he directs, yet thought the Young material to be false—which would make Young a false teacher. Why would he do that? Does he not have enough conviction to stand for biblical truth? Is not he showing a compromise? And why is he compromising? The only conclusion that can be drawn is that he, like those of John 12 “love the praise of men more than the praise of God” (vs. 43). Hicks, Grider, Mosher, Cates and the others who fellowship them (cf. II John 9-11) are just like those Jesus confronted in John 5 who “receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only” (vs. 44); true Pharissee-ism.

I bet that those just named will take great offense to being called Pharisees, yet this is exactly what Young calls faithful brethren in the Grider-published article. Note that leading up to his false statements in the last paragraph of his article, he shows how Jesus rebuked the Pharishees in Matthew 15:3. He then proceeded to say that “We can also become legalists if we bind our judgments or preferences on others, making them ‘tests of fellowship.’” What does he consider “judgments or preferences”? He explains by writing: “Which translations of the Bible are permissible for teaching and preaching?” By this it must be understood that Young, Grider, the entire staff of MSOP and the elders of Forest Hill think it only a matter of opinion as per which translations of the Bible are correct and which are not. So, then, the mistranslations of the NIV, NASB, ESV, NLT, et al. as per Romans 10:10 and Matthew 19:9 should not be viewed as an issue? The elders have no right to demand what translation is used; else they are “legalists”? Young then wrote that matters of judgment apply to “move[ing] or cancel[ing] the evening worship on Superbowl Sunday”. What about “seek[ing] first the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (Matthew 6:33)? What message are we sending when we place a sporting event as a priority above our service to God? If we truly love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul and might (Matthew 22:37), then we schedule our lives around Him, not Him around our lives. As if that statement were not bad enough Young went on to state that it is a matter of judgment if one “miss[es] a weekly service of the church to compete in a sporting event”. Wow, so just forget Hebrews 10:25, right? I mean, who can really know what that verse is saying? It is simply a matter of one interpretation vs. another, right? Wrong! It is a matter of knowing the truth (John 8:32) and practicing the truth (Colossians 3:17). To suggest that one can “miss” (i.e. forsake) a church assembly for a sporting event, is to suggest that one can miss the Lord’s service for any reason. A sporting event, fishing tournament, to watch your favorite TV show, because you are tired, etc. Now, either the Bible means what it says or it does not. Either we can know what it says or we cannot. Since the Bible does mean something by what it says (cf. II Timothy 3:16, 17), and we can know what it says (John 8:32), then it must follow that Hebrews 10:25 does not allow for one to miss a church service for the reasons Young and Grider give and still be pleasing to God. In these areas Young says “there is room for judgment or disagreement within the boundaries of God’s Law”. No sir, Mr. Young, there is not. That which Young is suggesting is the same thing suggested by denominationalists who say that the terms of salvation and manner of worship are all matters of one’s interpretation versus another. Yet, the Bible says that we can “prove all things” and “hold fast to that which is good” (I Thessalonians 5:21). This means that there is a standard by which things can be tested, and we can know what that standard is, “ye shall know the truth” (John 8:32).

Young’s final Grider and MSOP endorsed statement says, “To [demand conformity to our views in areas where there is room for judgment] moves us beyond the law of God into legalism, legislating for God.” Does it, Mr. Young? So, if we speak as the oracles of God (I Peter 4:11) and demand that unity be held on these oracles (I Corinthians 1:10; 4:17; II John 9-11), we are legalist? Well, so be it. The New Testament is the most legal document known to man, which has been communicated to man in a manner in which man can understand it (Ephesians 3:3-5) and obey it (Hebrews 5:9). If abiding by Bible teaching makes us legalists, then legalists we are and forever shall be.

* * * * * * * * * *
**CHANGE AGENTS’ REJECTION OF “PATTERN THEOLOGY”**

Richard Guill

Many years ago some preaching brethren set about to “restructure the church.” It was clear that they did not like the church as it was because it did not fit their conception of what the church ought to be. At about the same time a very prominent brother shocked the brotherhood by calling the church “a big, sick, denomination.” Brethren were horrified that anyone would think of the church as a denomination, especially a “sick” one.

That movement to restructure the church, to change the organization, work, and worship of it, continued through several decades until another prominent brother vowed his rejection of “pattern theology” and insisted that the church was “sectarian” and must change to survive. Then he, and a great multitude of his like-minded disciples, began to propose the changes they envisioned.

The church of Christ in any community, if it is faithful to its Head, and is abiding by His word, will “stick out like a sore thumb.” It conspicuously does not conform to the mold of the other churches in the community. There is no fellowship with the various churches in either their works or their worship. When the various denominations band together for a particular community project, the church of Christ will likely be the only religious group not involved. When the denominational “pastors” get together and form their “ministerial alliance,” the “church of Christ preacher” (their terminology), refuses to join the alliance or to attend their meetings. People say, “What an odd bunch that church of Christ group is!”

Sadly, however, that is no longer true of many who wear the name “church of Christ.” These congregations are led by preachers who are self-labeled as “progressive thinkers,” “scholars,” and as “front-runners.” These congregations have “elders” (really just spineless imitations thereof) who themselves are led, and allow the congregation to be led, by these preachers into fellowship with denominations. These preachers will begin by participating with the denominations in their “special services,” and then it will not be long until the denominational “pastor” will be invited to speak to the church as well. Soon there is a “joint service” between the two groups.

In such churches the ordained worship practiced for so many years now becomes a source of embarrassment and efforts begin to “jazz-up” their worship by incorporating things seen in denominations. Out goes the old traditional songs and in comes new “contemporary music,” even with instrumental music many times. Preaching and teaching is dull, so we bring in “drama.” All of this is very pleasing to the carnal mind and entertaining. Before long each act is being applauded and often singing is accompanied with rhythmical clapping. The “change agents” who are initiating such changes are not satisfied with the church as it has been through the ages. Especially distasteful to them is the “isolationist attitude” and they are determined to change the church of this century into one that better “fits in” with the denominations in the community and is “user-friendly” to a generation that has grown tired of the old ways. When you observe what and how these congregations change, you can see that this is an accurate picture of what is happening.

It is not easy for individuals or congregations to be non-conformists. It is much easier to blend in and conform. The world, under Satan’s guidance, continues to pressure us to conform, conform, conform. That is why Paul warned the Romans, “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2). The church of the Lord is “sanctified” (set apart, separated) from the world and is expected to maintain that separation (Ephesians 5:25, 26; II Corinthians 6:14-18).

Israel of old was often afflicted with the same evil attitude. In the days of the Judges she cast her eyes around to the other nations, all of which had kings over them, realized that she was the non-conformist, and began to clamor for a change which would make her like all the rest. “Make us a king to judge us like all the nations” (I Samuel 8:5). At a later time some “change agents” had already been at work among them and they had departed from the old ways and adopted some more “pleasing” ways. God’s prophet was given a message for them from God. Jeremiah called out, “Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein” (Jeremiah 6:16).

These preachers and churches today who are conforming to the ways and manners of the denominations around them present quite a paradox. They ridicule the idea of a pattern, reject “pattern theology” and sneer at the references to the “old paths.” But, what they fail to realize or admit is that all they are doing is just switching patterns! They are casting away God’s pattern for the church and its work and worship, sneering at such a concept, and then follow the pattern of denominational doctrines and practices. Where is the evidence that any of the changes advocated by them did not come from some denomination and has been practiced by them for years?

* * * * * * * * * *
These “change agents” are simply trying to conform the church into the image of those denominations around them. Churches that do so conform will surely suffer the same fate: “Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up” (Matthew 15:13).

On the other hand, there is a sense in which the church of the Lord must be a “conformed church.” It is expected to conform to the pattern, image, ideal, and plan of God. If it does not do so, it cannot be God’s church and have His approval.

The first congregation of the Lord’s church was established in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2). “And they continued steadfastly (they conformed their actions) in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread, and in prayers” (verse 42). That was not the manner in which they had formerly worshipped, nor was it the manner of worship of their Jewish neighbors, friends, and family members. Yet you do not hear them complaining that they were “different.”

Soon other congregations were springing up in different localities. As each was established and began its work and worship, it is noteworthy that they followed the same pattern. All those churches conformed to the same image or pattern. Whenever there began to be a deviation from that pattern in any congregation, instruction was given them to conform to that original pattern (I Corinthians 1:10).

There were already “change agents” at work in the first century. For hundreds of years the Jewish religion, under God’s law, had required circumcision of all its adherents, whether Jews, or Gentiles. However, this new group, “the church of Christ,” did not require circumcision of any member and did not observe the law of Moses. Certain “change agents” soon began to try to get the church to “conform” to those old laws and customs. They began to advocate that the Gentiles be required to be circumcised according to the law of Moses to be saved (Acts 15:1). Paul and Barnabas opposed them vigorously and stopped their evil works. They, along with other brethren, declared that the Lord’s pattern for the church’s faith and practice had not changed and would not change.

Those who would not “conform” to preach and teach only what the apostles had delivered would have the curse of God upon them (Galatians 1:6-9). If any preached a different doctrine that would bring division and offenses, they were to be “marked and avoided” as those who served not God (Romans 16:17). If any came to town and needed lodging or assistance, but preached a different doctrine, they were not to be greeted, housed, or otherwise encouraged or assisted in their evil work (II John 9-11).

Whenever any attempt was made to change the church in its organization, its worship or its work, it was met with vigorous opposition. Such change was quickly halted and they were urged to “conform” back to the pattern of the other congregations. They were to “all speak the same thing, have no divisions among you, but be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (I Corinthians 1:10); now that is conformity!

This kind of conformity to the Divine pattern by each congregation brought the kind of unity which God demanded and approved, and allowed the various congregations to cooperate fully in the great task of evangelizing the world. It did not bother them that they “stood out” from the rest of the community and were hated and persecuted because they would not compromise and “conform.” They counted it as something to rejoice about when they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ (Acts 5:41).

Many questions have been raised concerning the church and what it will be like in the years to come. Will it continue to exist and still be relevant? Must it change and conform to be more like the churches all around in order to still attract people? Must it conform to the growing trend of dropping its name, broadening its membership requirements, up-dating and enlivening its worship services, and calling itself a “Community Church” or “God’s Family” in order to survive? Many would so advocate and are working diligently to bring such change, but I am not among them, nor shall I ever be. God has not authorized any man or group of men to change the church which He planned and purposed before the foundation of the world and the one which His Son purchased with His own blood.

The church in this century must be no different from the church in previous centuries, unless it is in moving back to the divine pattern from whence it may have departed. Rather than conforming to the world and its religious diversity, which is to perish in the fires of the last great day, the church of Christ MUST CONTINUE TO CONFORM to the Divine pattern set forth by Christ and His apostles in the New Testament. We must continue to call upon men to conform themselves and their religious beliefs and practices to that Divine pattern, rather than to expect the church to conform to their varied ideas of what the church ought to be like. Remember, Jesus said, “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:4).

Yes, the church must conform; but to which pattern: God’s, or that of the world? As for me and my house, we will adhere to God’s pattern and boldly oppose all who seek to change the church of the Lord into the likeness of a God-condemned denomination!
WORLD GOVERNMENT II
Raymond Allen Hagood

In the previous article we proved that the infamous Illuminati in 1777 took over the Masonic lodges and are now using those lodges and their parallel institutions to control the governments of Europe, Canada and the USA. Their grand scheme is to create a world government in which they will control the world and propagate their world occult religion into a single world religion.

Illuminized Masonism is a textbook on deception. The whole religion is layer upon layer of deception to hide their real nature and purpose. If people, including large numbers of Masons, knew what it was all about, they would rise up, imprison its leaders, and abolish it from the face of the earth. Secrecy and deception are essential for the survival of Masons and their conspiratorial actions.

Martin L. Wagner in his book *Freemasonry: An Interpretation* on page 153 says the following concerning their deception: “This method for the communication and promulgation of the Masonic doctrines is so cunningly devised that it baffles on the one hand those who have professed to expose it and gives a rational explanation of its symbols and ceremonies, and, on the other hand, the majority of those who are loyal to the institution in catching its real sentiments.”

Wagner further says on pages 153 and 154:

The peculiar theological and religious ideas which Freemasonry holds and aims to inculcate, while positively non-Christian, are expressed in terms of Christian theology, not to express the Christian ideas or to show their harmony with Christian thought, but to give them a Christian coloring, the more effectively to deceive, mislead and hoodwink the neophyte, the conscientious member, and the non-Mason into whose hands Masonic literature may come, and also to intensify the task of the Mason to learn the real sentiments.

Manly P. Hall was a thirty-third degree Mason. He wrote 35 books, the most famous of which were *The Lost Keys of Freemasonry* and *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*. Regarding secrets and deception, Hall wrote on page 69 of *The Lost Keys of Freemasonry* the following:

Yet if the so-called secrets of Freemasonry were shouted from the housetop, the Fraternity would be absolutely safe, for certain spiritual qualities are necessary before real Masonic secrets can be understood by the brethren themselves. Hence, it is that the alleged “exposures” of Freemasonry, printed by thousands and tens of thousands since 1730 down to the present hour, cannot injure the Fraternity. They reveal merely the outward form and ceremonies of Freemasonry. Only those who have been weighed in the balance and found to be true, upright and square have prepared themselves by their own growth to appreciate the inner meanings of their Craft. To the rest of their brethren within or without the body their sacred rituals must remain, as Shakespeare might have said, “words, words, words”.

There is a note of arrogance in Hall’s words, and yet it reveals not only the layers of deception employed but an underscoring that only the “true Mason” knows the secrets. Can you imagine an organization so evil and so bad that they even deceive their own members from their real beliefs and purposes?

What are the real secrets of Masonism that only the “true Mason” knows? When you learn the secrets, you will understand why they do not want anyone to know their secrets, including their own members.

SECRET NUMBER ONE

In order to understand this secret, you need to understand the man who revealed the secret on July 14, 1889, to the 23rd Supreme Council Convention in Paris, France.

Albert Pike was born in 1809 and was the most powerful Mason in the world. He had every degree and honor extant in his lifetime conferred upon him. Giuseppe Mazzini appointed Pike to lead the Illuminati in the U.S. Pike would author several Masonic books, but his most famous work is a bible to Masons and is entitled *Morals and Dogma*.

In 1870 before Pike wrote *Morals and Dogma*, he received a letter from Giuseppe Mazzini, telling Pike about the need to create a super rite inside the traditional Masonic order. The book *Morals and Dogma* is the super rite or the final indoctrination for those who will control the world.

Pike was a very obese man and one of the most immoral beings ever to live. Pike was the Grand Master of The Order of the Palladium. *Palladium* comes from the Hindo word *pala*, which refers to the male reproductive organ. There are many rites in the Masonic religion which worship the male reproductive organ. Pike practiced his religion in earnest. He would go into the woods, accompanied by wagonloads of food and liquor. He would make a throne, take off all his clothes and engage
in orgies with prostitutes. He would drink massive amounts of liquor until he would lose consciousness.

Pike claimed that he spent 50 years developing the Luciferian Rite, which he revealed to a select few within the 33rd degree Supreme Council. So what is this great secret called the Luciferian Doctrine? Let Pike tell you in his own words. This is an exact quote from the message delivered to the Supreme Council in Paris in 1889.

That which we must say to the crowd is – We worship a god, but the god that one adores without superstition.

To you, Sovereign Grand Inspectors General [of the 33rd degree], we say this, that you may repeat it to the Brethren of 32nd, 31st, and 30th degrees – The Masonic religion should be, by all of us initiates of the high degrees, maintained in the purity of the Luciferian doctrine.

If Lucifer were not god, would Adonay, the god the Christians, whose deeds prove his cruelty, perfidy and hatred of man, barbarism and repulsion for science, would Adonay and his priests calumniate him?

Yes, Lucifer is god, and unfortunately Adonay is also God. For the eternal law is that there is no light without shade, no beauty without ugliness, no white without black, for the absolute can only exist as two gods: darkness being necessary to light to serve as its foil as the pedestal is necessary to the statue, and the brake to the locomotive.

In analogical and universal dynamics one can only lean on that which will resist. Thus, the universe is balanced by two forces which maintain its equilibrium, the force of attraction and that of repulsion. These two forces exist in physics, philosophy and religion. And the scientific reality of the divine dualism is demonstrated by the phenomena of polarity and by the universal law of sympathies and antipathies. That is why the intelligent disciples of Zoroaster, as well as, after them, the Gnostics, the Manicheans and the Templars have admitted, as the only logical metaphysical conception, the system of the divine principles fighting eternally, and one cannot believe the one inferior in power to the other.

Thus, the doctrine of Satanism is a heresy; and the true and pure philosophic religion is the believe in Lucifer, the equal of Adonay; but Lucifer, god of Light and god of Good, is struggling for humanity against Adonay, the god of Darkness and Evil.

According to the Masonic elite, the great architect of the universe is Lucifer. Remember in our first article how we noted that the Illuminized Masons are dualists. They believe in an eternal conflict between good and evil, and neither side can ultimately win.

Pike did not believe that Satan and Lucifer were the same person, though the Bible makes it clear that they are. Pike believed that God had a dual nature – a loving side, Lucifer, and a bad side, Adonay. Adonay, according to Pike, is the God of heaven that we worship and serve. Get the idea? The God that Christians think is good is really bad, and the Lucifer (Satan) that Christians shun and fight against is really good, after all. They turn it upside down and destroy faith in the God of heaven and replace it with a religion of worship of Satan. Since they think that Lucifer is good, they think they are doing good. The average member of the Masonic lodge does not have a clue that he is really worshipping Satan. They believe that they can be good Christians and good Masons. What a lie!

This type of information was even shocking to many of those in attendance in Paris in 1889. This letter by Pike leaked out and began to do real damage to the Masons throughout the world. It was so damaging that they created a lie to cover up these devastating revelations. They claimed that a man by the name of Leo Taxil forged the words of Pike which were read in Paris.

Arthur Waite in his A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry speaks of this matter, beginning on page 252 and following.

Leo Taxil joined with Dr. Henry Bataille, and they published a series of articles covering 250 issues and they were read by a large number of people. In these articles they affirmed six facts:

1. That behind universal Masonry, wheresoever spread over the four squares, there was another and most secret Masonry directing the whole institution.
2. That the Supreme Dogmatic Directory was at Charleston, having Pike at its head, with the title of Sovereign Pontiff of Universal Freemasonry.
3. That it was devoted to the culture of Lucifer, who manifested in the course of Masonic rite.
4. That as it was anti-Christian in religion, so it was revolutionary in politics.
5. That it dealt largely in occult or magical practices, which had amazing phenomena as their result.
6. That it initiated women on equal terms with men and in the same manner.

The Taxil and Bataille publication was a deadly exposé. The Masons have explained it all away as simply lies and fantasies made up by Taxil and Bataille.
Cont. from Page 11

The truth is that Masonry was exposed for what it was, and they were caught in their lies, but their machinery used to control information relegated this exposé into obscurity.

These people who are working to control the world do not view themselves as Satanists at all. They deny that they are Satanists and claim that they are seeking only good for the human race and that they, the enlightened ones, know better than we do what is good for us. Nothing is more dangerous than people doing evil, convinced that their evil is good.

These people and their various organizations are working night and day to destroy our freedoms, enslave us and force us into a world religion. There is a world conspiracy, and we are seeing it unfold as we witness our freedom being eroded, our industrial base being deliberately eroded and secular liberalism and modernism plundering Christianity in wholesale fashion. They are working hard to trick us into accepting their agenda, but if that fails, they are prepared to do much worse, as their history clearly demonstrates.