

What "Went Forth?"

By Robert Turner

What "went forth" from Jerusalem? Well, Isaiah prophesied the "ways---paths---law---and word" of the Lord would "go forth" (2:3). Fulfillment, as recorded in Acts 2: vindicates the prediction. One searches in vain for Peter's emphasis upon some institution that would save, or stand between God and man. Oh yes, the Lord's "church" was established---for when people "gladly received" the word (that had "gone forth") they became a part of that called-out body that belonged to Christ. But it is CHRIST who saves, via His ways, paths, etc.

Now, how does Christ's church grow? An excellent example is found in Acts 11. Gospel teachers came to Antioch and preached "the Lord Jesus" (vs. 20). Preached the "church"? No, preached that which had gone forth from Jerusalem---the "ways, paths, law, and word" of the Lord. Verse 21 says, "a great number believed, and turned unto..." the "church"? No; "to the Lord." Oh yes, in coming to the Lord they became a part of the Lord's people, His "church;" but the record says, they "turned unto the Lord."

Barnabas exhorted them to "cleave" (be faithful) "unto the Lord" (vs. 23). Why didn't he tell them to be faithful to the church? I don't know---it doesn't say. but I do know what it says. And in the growth and development of this effort we are told "much people were added unto the LORD." (rt)

We have discussed, to this point, the prophecy, coming into existence, and propagation of---what? Salvation in Christ! The product of this manifestation of grace---the called out people of God (1 Pet.

2:9)---are God's FLOCK, or BODY, FAMILY, KINGDOM, etc. There are figurative designations, each emphasizing some special characteristic of these people. "CHURCH" is a collective noun (like "flock") that is applied to these people---as a whole (Matt. 16:18), with geographic restrictions (Acts 9:31, A.S.), and as local organized groups (Phil. 1:1; 4:15).

But individuals may be cut off from the body of Christ (Rom. 11:20-22; 2 Pet. 2:2), and local churches may be no longer recognized---their "candlestick" removed (Rev. 2:1-5). This too, is determined on the basis of that which "went forth from Jerusalem." Diotrefes could change the roster of men, but God's roll counts for eternity (3 Jn. 8:9-10; 2 Tim. 2:16-19). Heeding "perverse things" (Acts 20:29-f), and "leaving thy first love" (Christ) is what removes individuals and local groups from God's favor.

Emphasis upon the institutional aspect of "the church" was one of the earliest steps to apostasy. The whole or universal body of people was seen as a corporate "society" which took precedence over the word of God. The "church" was soon regarded as authority for the word---"mother" of that which brought it into existence. The "infallible" church is an outgrowth of this earlier error. We quickly repudiate that fruit, but may plant its seed, if we forget that the WORD, not the "church," will judge us eternally.



Sunday 5:15 Kid's Class at the Building	Sunday Night College Devo and Singing at the Rouse's - David Maxson speaking!	Monday 7 PM Ladies Class on "Fruit of the Spirit" at Darla Hahn's	Tuesday 8 PM "Truth Seekers" at Student Center - Room 2310	Wednesday 12 Noon Ladies Class on "Women of the Bible" at the Rouse's	Tuesday 7 PM College Study at Bob Simpson's
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Sick			
Richard Wood (Melanie Smith's Uncle)	Eli Williams (Friend of Sarah Norman)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)	Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle)
Virginia Crawford (Hunter's Sister-In-Law)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Easton Alexander (Phillip Box's cousin's baby)	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Gaylord Huffman (Jennifer Daniel's Grandfather)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Betty Bradford	Brenda Chandler (Mason Chandler's Mother)
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, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Melissa Walker (Church Hahn's Cousin)	Ann Robinson (Sharon Bailey's Mom)	Marion Vanttal (Paula Davis' Uncle)

April Birthdays	News and Notes
2 - Missy Toombs 2 - Melanie Smith 3 - Sharon Bailey 6 - Maci Guthrie 7 - Mary Catherine Burns 8 - Laura Humphrey 10 - Stefan Richardson 14 - Kaylee West 14 - Jesse Roberts 16 - Carson Fowler 18 - Spencer Sullivan 18 - Joel Black 18 - Taylor Godwin 20 - April Jerkins 21 - Timothy Jones 23 - Anna Miller 24 - Bob Simpson 29 - Lottie Kate Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All who are interested in helping in our VBS on June 18-21 please fill out a form in the foyer. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Our new quarter begins today! <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R.J. Stephens is improving after his surgery. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Hartsell is improving after his surgery. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Let us remember our expectant mothers in our prayers, Candy Long and Terria Burton. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The baby, Andrew Hagewood, had a heart transplant on Thursday! <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Maxson from Atlanta will be speaking tonight and at the Student Devo!

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)

A People of Principle

By Tim Nichols



Thoughts to Ponder

The whole history of the world is discovered to be but a contest between the wisdom of God and the cunning of Satan and fallen men. The outcome of the contest is not in doubt.

Christians, above all others, are to be a people governed by principles. The world may not yield to an obvious code of conduct, but God's children recognize that the distinct teachings of God's Word give us higher and better rules than our own to guide us through life. Just as Luke wrote of "those things which are most surely believed among us" (Luke 1:1), we can speak of our common commitment to settled principles that have been revealed from Heaven. Those precepts are the standards held high by the pillar and ground of the Truth (1 Tim. 3:15). They are honorable, virtuous, and noble (Phi. 4:8-9). Only to the degree that our scruples are shaped by untainted Truth can we live uprightly.

Divine precepts are to be kept diligently (Psa. 119:4). We are to long for, love, and meditate upon them (vv. 15, 40, 159). We can understand them and talk of them (v. 27). They give us comfort and hope when men hold us in derision (vv. 49-56).

Divine principles come as a package (Psa.119:128, 168). We either trust God and obey Him concerning all of our ways, or we do not trust Him at all. He Who inspired the living, powerful Scriptures that are able to discern the thoughts and intents of our hearts knows everything about us and everything about every situation that we will encounter (Heb. 4:12-13).

Divine principles are the hand of God helping us (Psa. 119:173). They require us to acknowledge our own lack of personal wisdom and our need to rely upon Him. Those who count themselves wise enough to value their own wisdom above God's slaps His hand away.

Divine principles apply to all persons at all times and in all circumstances. Their nature is such that we cannot use them today for one purpose and then discard them tomorrow for different purposes. We cannot apply them to foes and then ignore them when friends are involved.

Principles connect with one another (Isa. 28:10-13) and builds upon another and enlarges it. Some make perfect sense only when understood in light of some others. All are consistent with all others. True precepts from the mind of God never contradict each other.

When human principles enter the stream they corrupt it. Sometimes men become guilty of attempting to teach others of their duty toward God by using mere human principles.

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men (Isa. 29:13).

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Call (334) 734-2133 or
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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES	
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Wednesday	Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

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This practice seems to especially prevail when difficult matters arise and consequential choices must be made concerning people. Even well respected and well-meaning brethren have been known to invent principles with which they attempt to control others under special circumstances. These often contradict and nullify principles God gave for our guidance.

For example, God teaches us to meekly seek to restore those overtaken in a fault (**Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim. 2:25**) and shows us that doing so has the effect of saving a soul from death (**Jam. 5:19-20; Jude 23**). We are to mark those who "cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine... and avoid them" (**Rom. 16:17**). God's principle is that we must have no company with brethren who will not obey God, but to admonish them as brethren rather than as enemies (**1 Cor. 5:9-11; 2 The. 3:6, 14-15**). We are not to bid God speed to those who will not respond to such admonitions (**2 John 9-11; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 Tim 3:5; Tit. 3:10**).

God provides a very detailed prescription for applying this principle to personal offenses (**Mat. 18:15-17**). These precepts are not difficult to understand or to apply until precepts of men interfere. Perhaps because these principles require action with reference to people we know and love and those who are unpleasant and bothersome men find it easy to develop their own principles that modify those of God. Even otherwise sound brethren can be guilty of this practice as are those who are apparently going out from among us. Since these Divine principles touch upon so many matters that affect the kingdom from fellowship with denominations to our personal duty to assist some specific brother to go to Heaven - it is worth our time to notice some of those human principles that would abrogate Divine ones.

"We Can Never Be Sure of the Facts"

This agnostic human precept flies in the face of **Matthew 18:15-17** and ignores the force that God tells us to give to credible testimony (**Num. 35:30; Deu. 17:6; 19:15; John 8:17; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28-29**). On the face of it, whenever God teaches us that we are to do certain things under certain conditions, then those conditions can be known to exist at least some of the time.

"The Truth Is Always Midway Between the Extremes"

This is not merely a harmless, human, unbiblical observation. It has grievous consequences when applied. It judges all testimony to be unworthy of belief. If we applied it consistently, we would have to find the midpoint between the testimony of Diotrephes and that of John (**3 John 9**) and between every other set of extremes between the Bible and the world. The Truth often has an extreme contrasting lie. Our duty is either to find the Truth or to recognize that we have not found it.

"It is Wrong To Deal With Personal Attacks; We Can Only Challenge the Doctrinal Sins of Others"

We are not able to find such precepts in the Divine principles. These human precepts would condemn Paul for dealing with the Corinthian brother who had his father's wife and John for responding to the personal attacks of Diotrephes. In our day these principles would provide safe haven for every slanderer and fornicator, whether in pulpit or pew.

Divine Principles do not yield. Unqualified Divine principles apply to all persons at all times and in all circumstances. Their nature is such that we cannot use them today for one purpose and then discard them tomorrow for different purposes. We cannot apply them to foes and then ignore them when friends are involved. They guard us from being partial in our judgment (**1 Tim. 5:21**). While they sometimes force us to act when we would much rather remain still, they also restrain us when we might otherwise act rashly.

Divine principles unite. When we keep them pure, they bring us together. When we contaminate them they divide: "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" (**Psa. 119:63**).

Divine principles liberate. They free us from the obligation to act when many around us apply pressure to do so. "And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts. I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed" (**Psa. 119:45-46; see also vv. 69, 78, 87, 94, 110, 134**). They free us from the responsibility of deciding what ought to be done or said (**1 Cor. 4:1-4**).

Principles impose obligations. Principles become premises, premises lead to conclusions, and conclusions have consequences. We bind ourselves with a duty to act in ways that agree with our principles once we have expressed what they are (**Rom. 2:1, 3**). The man who asserts that "the truth regarding another's conduct cannot be known," for example, must remain passive and silent at all times. Otherwise he is clearly out of duty, and his own conscience should testify to his hypocrisy if he speaks even once concerning another's conduct. No rebuke or kindly admonition should be needed to show it to him. He will be judged by even the arbitrary principles that he seeks to bind upon others (**Mat. 7:1-5**). We must take care not to adopt unbiblical principles as standards of judgment for others.

May we rather fill our hearts and mouths with Divine principles and apply the winnowing fork to those that are human.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power (**Col. 2:6-10**).



"For God Gave Us Not ..."

By Jim McDonald

"... a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and discipline" (**2 Tim. 1:7**).

The word "for" in the beginning of this verse ties what the apostle wrote about a spirit of fearfulness with the previous appeal that Timothy stir up the gift that was in him through the laying on of hands (**2 Tim. 1:6**). Let us not suppose Paul felt Timothy was neglectful in the use of his gift (his commendations of him to others would preclude that); but reminders are necessary for even the strongest of God's servants. Was not Abraham urged, "Fear not Abraham. I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward," and even the apostle himself was enjoined by Jesus, "Be not afraid but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee and no man shall set on thee to harm thee" (**Gen. 15:1; Acts 18:10**). Paul wrote the Corinthians that Timothy was his beloved and faithful child in the Lord who shall "put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ" (**1 Cor. 9:17**). The Philippians were told of Timothy, "I have no man likeminded who will care truly for your estate" (**Phil. 2:19**). Reminders are needed by all, including Timothy. He was not to be afraid to use his gift, but to "stir it up."

God gave us a spirit "of power." Since Paul included himself and other believers in this "gift of power," I take him to refer to the power that God gave by faith to all believers. Paul told the Philippians, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me" (**Phil. 4:13**). The same power was seen in Old Testament worthies for of them the Hebrew writer said that through faith they "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness was made strong, waxed might in battle, turn to flight armies of aliens" (**Heb. 11:33f**). All these things confirm Jesus' words to a distraught father who plead for help for his epileptic son begging, "If thou canst do anything, help us." Jesus response was, "If thou canst? all things are possible to them that believe" (**Mk. 9:22-23**). God gave us ... a spirit of love. What makes all things worthwhile with God is the element of love. "Neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love" (**Gal. 5:6**). James tells us our faith must

Boldness. Love. Self-restraint. These three characteristics moved early Christians and caused paganism and idolatry to topple before the mighty truth of God. These same qualities accomplish the same results today.

work, else it is dead (**James 2:26**). But, while our faith must work, Paul told the Corinthians that should they have faith to give their bodies to be burned, or to move mountains, yet have not love, it profited them nothing (**1 Cor. 13:2f**). It is possible to work strongly and mightily and be devoid of love; it is not possible to have love and fail to act. John wrote, "But whoso hath the world's goods and beholdeth his brother in need and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and in truth" (**1 Jn. 3:17f**). The greatest gift of all -- God's love for man -- was demonstrated in Jesus' death.

So, God gave us a spirit of love. "We love, because he first loved us" (**1 John 4:19**). If we love God, and we will also love our fellowman because if God loved us, we must love others whom God equally loved. Should our love for both God and man prompt us to help our fellowman in need and to share with him the saving power in the gospel?

God gave us a spirit of discipline. The KJV puts it "sound mind." This is the only occurrence of this exact word in the New Testament though other forms of the word does appeal. The thought is self-control, exercising restraint and control of oneself. Paul said he did so (**1 Cor. 9:27**). Peter told us to add "self control" to our faith (**2 Pet. 2:5ff**). Paul reasoned of self control before Felix (**Acts 24:25**). We must control our minds: "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (**Prov. 4:23**). David said, "I said, I will take heed to my words that I sin not with my tongue" (**Psa. 39:1**). Remember, we must "deny ungodliness and world lusts and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world" (**Titus 2:11**).

Boldness. Love. Self-restraint. These three characteristics moved early Christians and caused paganism and idolatry to topple before the mighty truth of God. These same qualities accomplish the same results today. "Let us be about our Father's business."

