

# “Confused” by the Truth

By Jonathan Perz

Have you ever had a discussion where the truth seemed more confusing than the lie? If you have, you know that awkward, discombobulating feeling that arises because something you have believed for an extended period of time—even a lifetime—has proven to be false. It can be quite overwhelming.

It is natural that your instinctive response is defensive, even hostile. "Who do you think you are?" and "How dare you judge me?" are phrases on the tip of your tongue. In the heat of the moment, you might even rationalize, "That can't be right." Should you utterly reject the "preposterous idea" while in your "confused" state of mind or should you recognize this feeling of "confusion" as a mental flag that moves you to openly reconsider a conviction, no matter how deeply held it might be?

We often become emotionally attached to what we believe and it is rarely pleasant to be proven wrong.

This explains the initial defensive response. However, the real quality of a heart is seen after the initial emotional roller coaster ride ends. Will we stay "confused" by the truth or will we embrace it, giving up the lie?

We can fear and procrastinate like Felix (**Acts 24:24-25**). We can shoot the messenger, as we reject "his truth" and "gnash at him with our teeth" (**Acts 7:51-60**). We can be moved by every wind of doctrine (**Eph. 4:14**). We can even remain in a perpetual state of "confusion" and have God reinforce "our lie" (**2 Thess. 2:11-12**)! On the other hand, we can simply receive the "love of the truth" (**2 Thess. 2:9-10**).

Momentary confusion at having a conviction disproven is understandable. Choosing to reject the truth or remain "confused" is simply inexcusable. What ever you choose, remember, your response will demonstrate the quality of your heart (**cf. Matt. 13:18-23**).



**Classes This Week**

<b>Monday 7 PM</b> Men's Class at the Davis'	<b>Tuesday 8 PM</b> "Truth Seekers" Student Center Room 2310	<b>Wednesday 12 Noon</b> Ladies "Proverbs" Class at the Rouse's	<b>Saturday Night</b> Kid's Classes 1-6th Grade 6-8PM Place: TBA 7th-12th 6:30-8:30 at the Normans
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**Sick**

Sam Cox (Friend of Anna Stallings)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	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)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Jeffery Miller (Friend of Walker Davis)
Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Roger Whatley (Daphene Whatley's son)	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Pat Webb (Friend of Jared Johnson)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins' Grandfather)	Diane Hudson (Josh Hudson's grandmother)	Arline Harkrider (Nichole Pender's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Don Meadows (Ashley Miller's step-father)	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	Madi Wise (Friend of the Robert's)
Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Frances Fultz (Davis Fultz's grandmother)	Judy Nichols (Suzanne's Mother)	Ann Scaff (Hannah Morris' grandmother)

**January Birthdays**

- 1 - David Ogle
- 2 - Chuck Hunt
- 4 - Phillip Box
- 6 - Daniel Rogers
- 6 - Erica Seymore
- 7 - Hunter Collins
- 9 - Liseth Aragon
- 11 - Spencer Hall
- 11 - Shepherd Hall
- 18 - Scott Vaughn
- 21 - Jacob Jerkins
- 23 - Connor Godwin
- 25 - Caleb Daniels
- 30 - Ashley Tucker
- 31 - Jennifer Daniels

**News and Notes**

- ☒ - Please remember Glenn Weeks, Caralise Hunt's father, in your prayers.
- ☒ - Thanks to all who worked so hard to make the weekend study and our meeting with Bob Buchanon a success!
- ☒ - Makenzie Reynolds was baptized into Christ on Monday night!
- ☒ - We have slots on the Lord's supper preparation list and for hosting and teaching the kid's class.
- ☒ - Please remember Sam Cox. Friend of Anna Stallings in your prayers as he battles cancer.
- ☒ - Let us remember Nicole Pender in our prayers as she is an expectant mother.

# 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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## Love It or Leave It

By Ed Harrell



**Thoughts to Ponder**

Truth without love is brutality, and love without truth is hypocrisy.

It is difficult to keep one's thinking truly undenominational. Proud, carnal attitudes constantly make their way into spiritual affairs. The sources of jealousy and strife today are the same carnal attitudes that plagued the Corinthian church. (**1 Cor. 3:1-5**)

I think few people have complained more about the mental and spiritual shortcomings of modern churches of Christ that I have. I intend to continue to do just that. We must guard against party factions, against denominational conceptualizations, against becoming simply another sect. The concept of undenominational Christianity must be treasured by us and taught to the world.

It seems to me that many of the young critics of the church today proceed on an entirely different set of assumption. Their criticisms do not reflect an intrinsic love and respect for simple faith but rather a personal revulsion against simplicity of faith and against simple people.

But ....

But I am troubled. Sometimes I am troubled when I hear others criticize (or admonish) because I wonder if our motives are the same and I wonder if our solutions are the same. I reprove my brethren because I love them, not because I find

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**Elders**  
Walker Davis  
(334) 703-0050  
Larry Rouse  
(334) 734-2133

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday**  
Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM  
**Wednesday**  
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM  
E-Mail:  
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Evangelist and Editor

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them unattractive. I am concerned about the inadequacies in churches of Christ because I consider them to be precisely that — - churches of Christ, the hope of the world.

It seems to me that many of the young critics of the church today proceed on an entirely different set of assumption. Their criticisms do not reflect an intrinsic love and respect for simple faith but rather a personal revulsion against simplicity of faith and against simple people. Their call for a deeper individual commitment to godliness, comes off sounding like a rejection of literal obedience and the acceptance of authority. I feel I am being faced again with the ancient liberal choice of being either right or righteous.

In short, I sometimes hear young men saying the same things that I think need saying — but our thoughts lead us to act in different ways. I like simple plain preaching done by a corn-fed Alabama preacher (even at the risk of a passage being taken out of context). They like the evangelical scholars (few having attained the elevated intellectual status of appreciating sophisticated liberal scholarship) and yearn for their fellowship. I like conservative churches, even though some in them are contentious, and some do not understand undenomi-

national Christianity (by the way, I think that most do). They find the spirit much sweeter in liberal churches, even in denominational churches, though they often are less than frank in saying so. (And is it possible to imagine that one would find an understanding of undenominational religion here). The difference between us are profound in act if not in word. I believe their actions reflect serious misunderstandings about the nature of the church of the Lord, about the quality of those who hold that faith today, and about the quality of religion in the sectarian world.

One final point. Be honest. I have no respect for a man who hides his convictions behind rhetoric. If one believes that the churches of Christ in this country are the Lord's people in our time, fighting his battles, being faithful to his patterns, then let's try to build up the cause and expand the borders of the kingdom. If one believes that the "conservative churches of Christ" are an unenlightened, often bigoted, partially correct, contentious wing of the "Christian world" that one happens to be trapped in because of family or traditional loyalties, then let's get that understanding up front. I can appreciate most any one's work in the kingdom (even if it seems unenlightened to me) if I can see that he loves it. When one's affections turn to other places, then it is time to leave. - **Vanguard, Nov, 1977**



## Responding to Our Enemies

By R. J. Evans

*"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake" (Matt. 5:11).*

How do we handle a person who reviles us, persecutes us, and says things about us which are not true? The natural response is to retaliate and get even. But how are we to respond to our enemies and be pleasing unto God? Let us go to His Word for the answers.

1. **REJOICE** if we are being mistreated because we are faithfully serving the Lord. If we are suffering because of our evil deeds, then we should be ashamed. However, the Apostle Peter tells us—"Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter" (1 Pet. 3:15-16). Notice the next verse following our text: "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matt. 5: 12). Although some may seek to make our lives miserable here on earth, our reward in heaven will be great if we remain faithful while we are hurting for His sake.

2. **LOVE THEM, DO GOOD TO THEM, AND PRAY FOR THEM.** This is what Jesus was teaching in **Matthew 5:44**: "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you." Normally, we will have to do a lot of praying for *ourselves*, asking for strength, before we will be able to do this for our enemies. But we will reap many benefits if we can sincerely do what Jesus commands in this passage. Again, let us observe the inspired words of

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the Apostle Peter, as it relates to this kind of situation. "...not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing" (1 Pet. 3:9). Remember—this is the example Jesus left for us and we are to follow in His steps. "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example,

that you should follow His steps: 'Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth,' who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Pet. 2:21-23).

3. **TURN IT OVER TO GOD.** When men crucified our Lord, He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Lk. 23:34). In one short prayer, we find Jesus loving His enemies, blessing His enemies, and praying for His enemies. The Apostle Paul tells us to *turn it over to God* when he said: "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head: Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:19-21). This is basically what Christ was teaching in His "Sermon on the Mount" in **Matthew 5:38-48**.

In a sense, we are being good to ourselves when we are good to our enemies. May the Lord help and be with us when we are meeting the challenge of correctly **responding to our enemies.**

