

# Saving the Church

By Robert Turner

Lots of people are trying to save the church these days. There are so many problems among brethren, and so many brethren who are apparently unconcerned, that I suppose we should rejoice that someone cares.

Fact is, I have considered saving the church a time or two. Maybe I had a touch of the Don Quixote spirit and fancied the giants reeling from my trusty lance. But no more. In the first place, it is hard to find a church that wants to be saved, and those who do want this, are pretty well on the road with a "do it yourself" job.

Too, it occurred to me that the church already has a Savior. My job, and that of every concerned member, is to stir up greater love and respect for the divine Savior. We need a better understanding of what He saves, and how.

We may work up an ulcer trying to save a union of people while the true Savior is dividing people in order to preserve unity in the faith. **Matt. 10:32-39; 1 Cor. 5:1-8.**

We may fail to confess Him because, in our pride, we are trying to save our "place" in the community. Not in-

frequently, we are more concerned about what people will think than we are with pleasing God. **(Jn. 12:42-43)**

And multitudes are more concerned with the "party" (our institutions, our brotherhood) than they are with the church for which Christ died.

Christ saves the church ONE MEMBER AT THE TIME. **(1 Cor. 12:12-f; Jn. 15:1-6; Gal. 3:26-27).** The body of Christ, His church **(Eph. 1:22-23)** of which He is Savior **(Eph. 5:23)**, is composed of INDIVIDUALS. One by one, as we are saved from sins, we are added to this church. **(Acts 2:47).** This is a crucial point, yet one we seem determined to ignore, or refuse to obey.

As the church was first saved from "alien" sins, so must it be saved from worldliness, the social gospel, institutionalism, or any other sins. Somehow, some way, each individual member must be aroused from sleep, to renew his love and service to Christ, who alone can save the church.



**Classes This Week**

<b>Sunday 5:15 PM</b> Kid's Class at the Building	<b>Sunday Evening</b> College Devo. And Singing at the White's. Aubrey Belue will be teaching!	<b>Tuesday 8 PM</b> Truth-seekers in Student Center Rm 2225	<b>Tuesday 7 PM</b> Ladies Prayer Meeting at the Building	<b>Thursday 10 AM</b> Ladies Class "Amazing Women of the Bible" at the Rouse's	<b>Thursday 7 PM</b> Men's Class at Walker Davis'
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**Sick**

Brad Marshall (Allie Hosey's Cousin)	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)	Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller)
Donna Pridmore (Erin Miller's Mom)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Mark Dean (Father of Logan Dean)	Jerry Foropoulos (Anna Jean's Uncle)
Jon Jon Henderson (Suzanne Stagner's cousin)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Bob Cannon (Friend of Holly Law)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Eli Williams	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	Ted Nelson (Sheryl Fowler's Cousin)
Lisa Carter (Josh and Luke Carter's mother)	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkin's Dad)	Toni and William Herd	Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle)

**October Birthdays**

- 1 - Aiden Hahn
- 2 - Suzanne Stagner
- 3 - James Malloy
- 3 - Jennifer Hasty
- 4 - Jordan Corneil
- 6 - Jessica Anderson
- 7 - Molly Borden
- 8 - Kelsey Parsons
- 8 - Heath Fowler
- 8 - Coleman Padgett
- 11 - Mason Chandler
- 12 - Stacy Norman
- 14 - Grant Smith
- 15 - Ashton Guy
- 17 - Abbie Buchanan
- 20 - Evan Pender
- 20 - Keith Bailey
- 22 - Christopher White
- 22 - Meredith Bragwell
- 24 - Suzanna Roberts
- 24 - Sarabeth Roberts
- 25 - Bethany Bradford
- 26 - Palmer Daniels
- 29 - Belle Johnson
- 29 - Matt Hall
- 31 - Kitty Tam

**News and Notes**

- ☒ - Lets keep in our prayers our expectant mothers, Laura Humphrey, Brittany Bagent, Shang Li and Jana Hall!
- ☒ - Alyse Nash has gone home from hospital and baby Easton has been moved from NICU to intermediate care.
- ☒ - Remember Tim Morton and also Matthew Cavender, in your prayers as both are deployed to Afghanistan.
- ☒ - We Rejoice in the baptisms of Jude Hosey and Caroline Meadows!
- ☒ - Michael Bessie's sister, Yolanda Stewart, is meeting with doctors to determine treatment for cancer.
- ☒ - Aubrey Belue will be preaching tonight and leading the student devotional.
- ☒ - All audio is immediately uploaded to [www.auchurch.com](http://www.auchurch.com). Also CD's are in foyer after each service.

# 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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## Protecting Churches From Error

By Connie Adams



**Thoughts to Ponder**

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

**(1 Corinthians 3:10)**

Recent events at the Richland Hills church in Fort Worth, Texas (said to be the largest church of Christ in the country) have focused attention on the question as to how congregations can protect themselves from digression. This congregation, which has been aligned with the institutional movement, has recently begun serving the Lord's supper on Saturday night and using mechanical instruments of music in some of their services. Rich Atchley, the "senior minister," has defended these changes and claimed that ten years earlier he received a revelation from the Holy Spirit that this should be done. His arguments in defense of mechanical instruments of music are the same ones which gospel preachers have refuted again and again for many years. They may appear new to a younger generation of preachers. The April issue of The Spiritual Sword has a thorough expose of this whole episode with a complete refutation of the arguments made in defense of mechanical instruments of music.

of any mechanical instruments of music on the premises, to the most recent change on November 16, 2006 when another amendment was filed which deleted the prohibition against mechanical instruments of music. Within three days of this new amendment, it was announced that there would be a service with the Lord's supper and mechanical instruments of music on Saturday nights.

For many years, congregations have sought to protect themselves from innovations by restrictive clauses in the deeds of the property. This came in the wake of the divisions which occurred in the early part of the twentieth century along with lawsuits over the property and who should maintain possession of the property. It was natural to try to prevent such from happening again. But when the will of the majority changes on various issues, then deeds can be re-written, as this case in Fort Worth shows.

**WHAT IS THE BEST DEFENSE?: --**

The answer is simple, but the application requires firmness, diligence, and persistence. No congregation can ever be any more secure than the quality of the teaching it receives.

"They shall all be taught of God" **(Jn**

*(Continued on page 2)*

**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:**  
[larryrouse@aubeacon.com](mailto:larryrouse@aubeacon.com)

**Larry Rouse**  
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(Continued from page 1)

**6:45**). "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (**Titus 2:11,12**). Titus was charged, "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority" (**Titus 2:15**). Timothy was instructed, "These things teach and exhort and he was warned against those who "teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness" (**1 Tim 6:2,3**). Paul said to Timothy, "the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (**2 Tim 2:2**). "Preach the word...for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (**2 Tim 4:2-5**). Paul practiced what he preached. At Ephesus, he was evangelistic for "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus both Jews and Greeks" (**Acts 19:10**). But he also taught them publicly and from house to house, keeping back nothing that was profitable, and did not shun to "declare unto them all the counsel of God" (**Acts 20:20,27**).

**WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?:** -- Elders are charged to feed and guard the flock (**1 Pt 2:2,3; Heb 13:17**). They must keep a close watch on what is being taught, not only in the pulpit but in the Bible classes as well. They need to keep themselves informed as to currents of thought and practices among brethren. If they do not study and keep up, then they will be blindsided and trouble will follow. Some elders have their heads in the sand. They do not know what is going on and do not seem to care. Sometimes they try to fence in preachers to keep them from dealing with issues which churches need to know about. What is being studied in Bible classes? Do the young people know the difference

between the New Testament church and denominations? Do they know why mechanical instruments of music are not used in the worship? Do they understand why the church does not provide entertainment and recreation? Are they really studying the Bible or watered down pabulum? If elders do not watch, then don't be surprised if a generation arises which do not know the Lord.

Preachers have a large role to play in this matter. Pretty little sermonettes filled with snappy one-liners, stories, stories sharply illustrated in living color with our Power Point displays, may get and hold attention, but where are the expository studies of books of the Bible? Where is the refutation of the religious error which is all around us and which some members are absorbing like sponges from the religious channels on cable TV? Where are sermons on the need for Bible authority and how to establish it? Where are the sermons on the nature, work, and organization of the church? Where is the exposure of false teaching on the plan of salvation? Too many churches are suffering from spiritual malnutrition because of pitifully weak preaching being heard from week to week. When you "speak things that become sound doctrine" (**Titus 2:1**), some in the pews will squirm and complain and some elders may get up and try to smooth it over. Worldly minded folks are not comfortable hearing sin plainly identified exposed, and condemned. Yes, we have to "speak the truth in love" (**Eph 4:15**), but we must be sure to speak the truth. All of it.

Faithful Christians all bear responsibility in protecting the church against error. Informed Christians should insist that pulpits and classrooms echo with the sound of the old Jerusalem gospel. They should appoint men as elders who are unquestionably sound in the faith and committed to defend it. They should demand that the truth be taught, and then commend it and uphold it when it is done. Unless elders, preachers, and all Christians are committed to the truth, then all the restrictive clauses in deeds will not protect congregations from the shifting opinions of untaught and uncommitted members.

**Truth Magazine, Vol. 51, No. 8, August 2007.**



## Evil Comes With Little Steps

By Aubrey Belue

To "sin a little" is not so bad, they say. "Oh, it is just a little matter," we hear. There are so many among us who are ready to exercise tolerance, even condoning errors so long as they seem "minor" to us. Just a "little mistake" can't hurt, they say. Sounds good?

Such thinking, a complacency about such things, totally ignores one of the most insidious and deadly aspects of the doing of wrong. That is, no one ever stops with just one sin, or one doctrinal departure! This is the message of both experience and scripture. What is seen as just one small step at first will eventually develop into an obvious and uncheckable decline into the depths of sin. King Saul is an illustration of this. His first departure from the true path came when he faced the possibility of discouragement among his troops, which led him to get out of his place in personally offering a sacrifice to invoke God's help in a coming battle. As he said, "...I FORCED myself"...to assume the role of priest (**1 Sam 13:12**). Before long, he is willing to more openly go against God in refusing to kill the king of the Amalekites and in deciding to save the best of the animals to offer as sacrifice unto God (**1 Sam 15:22-23**). That first small presumption left him with his guard down against an even greater act of self-will.

David found himself in a situation in which he was tempted to commit sin with Bathsheba. No doubt he had no thought of what was to come--how his initial sin of adultery led to the further sin of lying, and wound up with murder (**2 Sam 11**). Just this one sin (he might have said), and I will make it right with God.

Historically, this is best illustrated by the growth of the papacy. The accomplished departure in organization which culminated in

the Roman hierarchy (Pope, cardinal, archbishop, bishop, priest, etc.) is a glaring contrast to the pure new Testament order, with each congregation having equal status with each other, and no centralized overseers. No doubt those second century disciples would have hotly denied the idea that they would ever countenance the idea of one man over the whole church, but they were willing gradually to select a "presiding" elder from among those formerly equal, and then to accept an area wide "committee" of these "presiding elders" to oversee a given area; then to condone the selection of a sort of "district overseer" to preside over these "presiding elders", and so on it went, til finally the complete package from the pope on down was swallowed down without significant objection.

It is that way regarding the decline of individual religion. One who was once a faithful servant of God does not immediately become a reprobate--his fall may begin with an occasional missing of services, a visit to a questionable place of recreation, a vocal slip in using profanity at some real or imagined hurt, etc. His initial sense of enthusiastic participation may slip into an attitude of "duty", going through the motions and seeking any imagined justification for omitting some duty or service.

And what is the remedy? Never to take the first step! This is why we must be careful to do ALL God says, in JUST the way He says it. The slightest departure, if left unnoticed or unrebuked, can swiftly lead to a condition impossible to reverse. Let us be careful to do all the Bible says, and nothing else!

