

When the current issue is available you will be notified

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

## *Recreating the Cosmos: A Holistic Reading of Paul's Letter to the Galatians*, by Jeremy W. Barrier. **A critical review by Roy Davison**

Jeremy W. Barrier is Director of the Graduate Program and Associate Professor of Biblical Literature at Heritage Christian University in Florence, Alabama.

This book resulted from his work during ten months as a Humbolt Scholar at the Faculty of Catholic Theology of the University of Regensburg in Germany.

The book consists of 110 pages and is published by Cascade Books, Eugene, Oregon. Copyright 2017. It has an attractive cover and although the type is rather small it is quite readable. Electronic versions are available.

This book is not a commentary on Galatians, and does not claim to be. It is a “reading” (personal interpretation) of Galatians by Jeremy Barrier. He also describes it as a “series of meditations” (p. 108). This gives the author much leeway to write whatever comes to his mind.

He is a good story-teller and his many accounts of personal experiences are interesting, although it is not always clear how they relate to Galatians.

It is not a scholarly work. Key terms with various possible meanings are not defined and sources are not documented, except that a bibliography is provided at the back.

The author states his aim:

The purpose of this book is to present a meditation on Paul's text to the Galatians with the intended purpose of reclaiming Paul for those of faith, like myself, who have grown tired of thinking that Christians are the people who draw lines, make

distinctions, and police borders. This book is an attempt to shift our vision of Paul away from one that sees him as one whose major role was the policing of religious borders (p. 6).

The fundamental question, then is: Are Christians supposed to draw lines, make distinctions and police borders? And, what does Paul teach about this in Galatians?

Although Barrier does not state this specifically, except that on page 4 he mentions that a wrong idea has prevailed for 500 years, he is opposing the common understanding of Galatians, chapter 1, by Protestant reformers. After discussing the curse Paul pronounces on any who change the gospel, Martin Luther states in his commentary on Galatians 1:9, “In spite of this emphatic denunciation so many accept the pope as the supreme judge of the Scriptures.” John Calvin, discussing Galatians 1:9, states: “To what poor subterfuges do the Papists resort, in order to escape from the Apostle's declaration!”

The Protestant reformers believed that Paul's strong statement in chapter 1 entitled them to classify Roman Catholicism as being accursed by God because of its departures from the original gospel. Were they wrong? I think not.

To accomplish his purpose of discrediting people “who draw lines, make distinctions, and police borders” Barrier must deal with Galatians 1:8, 9. Thus he has an entire chapter “On Maledictions (Or On Cursing).” In this chapter he misrepresents and maligns Paul in an attempt to escape the

(Continued on Page 3)

### IN THIS ISSUE.....

A CRITICAL REVIEW—ROY DAVISON.....	1
EDITORIAL—DAVID P. BROWN.....	2
IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND—EDITOR.....	3

ALL THAT MATTERS—DUB MCCLISH.....	6
CHURCH DIRECTORY.....	8

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher  
dpbcftf@gmail.com

COMMUNICATIONS received by *CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH* and/or its Editor are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we are free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383 or dpbcftf@gmail.com. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## FREE—FREE—FREE—FREE—FREE—FREE

To receive CFTF free, go to [www.cftfpaper.com](http://www.cftfpaper.com) and sign up. Once done, you will be notified when the current issue is available. It will be in the form of a PDF document that can be printed, and forwarded to friends.

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR THE PAPER EDITION

Single Print Subs: One Year, \$25.00; Two Years, \$45.00.

NO REFUNDS FOR CANCELLATIONS OF PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS.

## ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

*CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH* exists to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we advertise only what is authorized by the Bible (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary and reserve the right to refuse any advertisement.

All setups and layouts of advertisements will be done by *CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH*. A one-time setup and layout fee for each advertisement will be charged if such setup or layout is needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than one month preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be canceled by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding of and cooperation with our advertising policy.

MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SETUP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$50.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

*CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH* is published bimonthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

## Editorial...

# WHAT ELDERS OWE THE CHURCH

The same New Testament of Christ that reveals on its pages the plan of salvation for sinful man also has a plan for the organization of Christ's church to which our Lord adds all those He saves from their past sins. One plan is God's will as much as the other. Thus, if we are to live faithful Christian lives, it is obligatory upon all of us to know the organizational structure of the body of the saved. This involves knowing that Christ is the singular head of His church (Col. 1:18) and that there are men who are to serve Jesus by taking care of His church according to His will. We need, therefore, to know the terms the Holy Spirit employed when referring to these men who are under shepherds to Christ (1 Pet. 1-4). The Greek terms applied to these caretakers of the Kingdom of Christ transliterated and translated are:

1. *Episcopos* (bishop, overseer).
2. *Presbuteros* (presbyter, elder).
3. *Poiman* (pastor, shepherd)

It takes a proper understanding of all three of these words for us to better understand what God expects of those men who wear these names—what their duty is to the church. Of course, we must take the totality of the information of the Bible concerning them, especially the teaching of the New Testament, to understand as we ought what that duty to the churches they oversee involves.

1. *Episcopos* has to do with *what* they do—their work.
2. *Presbuteros* pertains to their *dignity*—chronological age, especially spiritual age, wisdom, dedication to Christ, experience, the importance of Bible authority to them and their knowledge of how to ascertain it, their willingness to tenaciously abide by it, the qualifications a man must possess to become an elder, and remain one.
3. *Poiman* designates *how* they do their work. They are to work as shepherds in tending their flocks.

Much could and needs to be taught with regularity concerning the number of men in the eldership, how men become elders in the Lord's church, how one is "unmade" an elder, and all that the New Testament has to teach, whether explicitly (in just so many words) or implicitly (by logical deduction). In other words, a thorough study of what the New Testament says about elders of the Lord's church must be undertaken to truly know the topic. If not, unqualified men will be appointed. Further, even those who are qualified will not understand as they ought the obligations God has laid on their shoulders that belong to no other church mem-

(Continued on Page 4)

(Continued From Page 1)

obvious meaning of what Paul says.

He begins the chapter thus: “Okay, I admit that a title such as ‘On Maledictions’ is not very obvious. Well, the only alternative title I could think of was ‘Damn You All to Hell’” (p. 14).

Does that fairly represent Paul’s statement? Or is it an attempt to prejudice the reader against Paul?

What does Paul say:

**But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed (Gal. 1:8, 9).**

When facing departures from the original gospel we must draw lines, make distinctions, and police borders!

Barrier leads up to his quotation of this passage in a flip-pant way with the following false description of Paul’s statement:

Paul follows his greeting with an intense curse; calling upon the gods sitting in the clouds to rise up from their lofty beds and thrones, to take spears, gauntlets, arrows, and swords in hand, and descend upon the mountainous regions of Galatia bringing utter ruin and destruction upon these inhabitants. Well, not every inhabitant—just a fell swoop lopping the heads off of just those who receive Paul’s letter (p. 15).

There is much wrong with this description. (1) He is trying to associate Paul’s statement with heathen curses rather than relating it to Old Testament teaching. A curse of God is the opposite of a blessing of God (see Gen. 12:3; Deu. 11:26, 29; 28:16-20; 29:14-20; 30:19). (2) He first says that Paul is calling on heathen gods to rain destruction on all the inhabitants of Galatia. He “corrects” this to “Well, not every inhabitant—just a fell swoop lopping the heads off of just those who receive Paul’s letter.” Since he admits that the first part of the statement was wrong, why did he leave it in the book? But his “correction” is also wrong! The curse did not apply to those who received Paul’s letter, but only to false teachers, including Paul himself if he should depart from the original gospel! (3) This description is not only false, but extremely distasteful, disrespectful to Paul and the Holy Spirit, and maybe even blasphemous.

Barrier demonstrates a lack of respect for Paul:

If an angel descended in my presence and explained to me good news in a new way, I would be inclined to listen; quite frankly, I don’t think I would care what Paul thought. Clearly, Paul is coming across as quite an arrogant ole fellow, and maybe he needs to calm down a bit (p. 18).

To “substantiate” his accusation of arrogance, he states: “This is a man who believed that he had actually been called up to heaven by God (2 Cor. 12:1-10)” (p. 19). Barrier says that Paul considered himself to be “the chief of staff, the ma-

ajority-whip, the hit man for the mob boss...” (p. 20). Where does Barrier get this? This is not a meditation. This is a wild imagination and again, one that borders on blasphemy.

We are not surprised then when Barrier asks: “Does this mean that I approve of all of Paul’s words, methods, tactics, and approaches? No!” (p. 21). Paul wrote: “**If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord**” (1 Cor. 14:37).

Barrier does not view Paul’s accounts of visions as being reliable:

Further, in Galatians 1 and also 2 Corinthians 12, the texts (amongst others) seem to imply that Paul was prone to having apocalyptic auditory and visionary experiences, where he claimed to have been interacting with ‘the Lord,’ while the revelations of god are unfolded before him (p. 103).

It is strange that in the beginning of the book “God” is capitalized, but in the latter part, it is written with a small letter, “god.”

In this review I have focused on the stated purpose, to present a meditation on Paul’s text to the Galatians with the intent purpose of reclaiming Paul for those of faith, like myself, who have grown tired of thinking that Christians are the people who draw lines, make distinctions, and police borders (p. 6).

In Galatians, Paul’s lines are drawn so forcefully and closely, however, that Barriers “meditations” just demonstrate his own lack of respect for Paul and his writings.

His book contains many more untruths and private interpretations that could be exposed but this will suffice to reveal the approach and nature of the book. (This article was first published in brotherhoodnews.com on August 21, 2018. Printed in *CFTF* by the author’s permission.)

—roydavison@oldpaths.net



## IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND

For some time schools operated by members of the church of Christ, some churches, and lectureships have served as havens for various false teachers. They use them as launching sites to fire their missiles of error into the churches. Although the foregoing is bad enough, other brethren believe they can reject a certain false doctrine, but fellowship the one who teaches it. Further, they think nothing of fellowshipping the false teacher’s supporters, who may or may not believe the false doctrine. It is as if God does not care about their actions. But God does care. 2 John 9-11 continues to read and mean what it always did and it will read and mean the same at the final judgment (John 12:48). False fellowship hurts the church as much as false doctrine does. —Editor

(Continued From Page 2)

ber. However, in this article we will not concern ourselves with those and other important aspects of the New Testament's teaching regarding elders, *but we will concentrate on what elders owe the church members they are charged with shepherding.*

No man should desire to be an elder without fully knowing his duty to qualify himself. The qualifications a man must meet in order to be an elder were given by the Holy Spirit in 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, and other passages bearing on being an elder. They, therefore, are not to be taken lightly.

Elders are instructed in Acts 20:28 to **“take heed”** to themselves before they begin to consider taking heed to the brethren. *Prosecho* is the Greek word that translates into **“take heed,”** meaning “to be attentive to” (See Vine, p. 87, 1966). The significance of the Greek present imperative of *prosecho* is this, elders must “keep on taking heed” to themselves. Thus, elders must be sure of their own lives regarding their relationship to Christ.

An eldership's duty to the church they superintend is seen in the word *episcopos* of Acts 20:28. This word means one charged with the duty of seeing that work to be done by others is done rightly; guardian, superintendent (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/episkopos.html>). It is found in 1 Timothy 3:1 and 1 Peter 5:2. Here we need to emphasize that to “oversee” does not mean to “overlook.” In other words one does not have to “see” to be able to “oversee.” One would do well to think deeply about the meaning of that last sentence.

Elders must think of the church as the New Testament teaches them they ought to think. Thus, they will care for the church members as they ought. They will be willing to spend the necessary time required with each church member under their oversight. If they are unwilling to do so, then they are not faithful to the Lord.

Elders must not always be reactive to problems among the brethren, but proactive. This they can in part do by seeking to know and meet the individual “sheep's” needs as the New Testament points out and defines those needs. Thus, as overseers, elders are charged with the responsibility of “ruling” the church. Clearly, their “ruling” the flock involves them knowing the individual church members. The foregoing fact is made clear in Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; 1 Timothy 3:5; 5:17, and Titus 1:7.

In Titus 1:7, Paul called an elder a **“steward of God.”** “Steward” translates the Greek word *oikonomos*, meaning an administrator of God's House who, of course, is under God's authority (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/oikonomos.html>). Whether Diotrophes was a rogue preacher, elder, or other church member, one thing is for certain, he was not concerned about being God's steward to the Lord's church.

The decisions elders make mean that they bear the responsibility for the impact of their decisions have on the congregation. Elders do not, and must not, make laws that God did not make. However, as we have taught over the years regarding ascertaining New Testament authority for our beliefs and actions, with every New Testament obligation there is an area of expediency. It is in this area that an eldership decides the options that best expedite (gives the greatest advantage to) a congregation in discharging its God-given obligations.

Of course, elders have the great responsibility of gathering all the relevant facts necessary to make such serious decisions. Faithful concerned elders understand this involves them knowing the whole church and all that is involved in coming to such knowledge. Thus, the church must understand that in the area of options they can, if you please, have “their say,” but the final decision is to be made by the elders. The New Testament does not teach preacher rule, deacon rule, woman or women rule, or clique rule. All such “ruling” is sinful. The elders owe the church the kind of attention necessary for them to “rule” the blood-bought church as the Lord has ordained and for the spiritual good of the church.

On the other hand, the elders should desire that the church be kept informed on matters pertaining to the work of the church. Elders must remember that it is the work of the church and not the work of the elders only. Indeed, we are studying about what the elders owe the church. There would be no elders if there was no church and there would be no money in the church treasury if the brethren did not contribute it to the Lord. In the organizational structure of the church, the church has its obligations to the Lord that must be discharged. This involves the elders doing the work God has assigned them. However, elders do not “rule” the church as a corporate board. Each member of the church was placed in the church by the Lord and the elders as God's stewards ought to ever keep that in mind.

The work of the church must be planned, and who is it that God expects to plan the work of each congregation of His flock? The late J. W. McGarvey helps us to see the answer to the preceding question. He wrote concerning the Greek word *episcopos*, “In all these instances it designates persons who have oversight of the persons for the purpose of directing their labors and securing a faithful performance of the tasks assigned them” (Elders p. 17, <http://www.gravelhill-churchofchrist.com/ebooks/McGarvey,%20J.W.%20-%20Treatise%20on%20the%20Eldership.pdf>). If a person thinks he can be a faithful elder without taking the necessary time (yes, even giving up other things he enjoys doing) to accomplish the Lord's work for the Lord's church in the Lord's way, that person is not qualified to be an elder. Further, if he expects to “drag his feet” on decisions involving the church, or be influenced by church “lobbyist” in his family or out, then he ought not be surprised when those who are convicted

and guided by the scriptures decide not to jeopardize their souls by remaining in or under such an eldership. There are some people who do not care about what some consider to be positions of prestige, or as they were called among the Jews of Jesus' day, the "chief seats." The old saying about Satan ("It is better to rule in Hell than to serve in Heaven") may have importance to some—yes, some church members and even elders—but it does not sway the faithful steward of God from scripturally shepherding the Lord's church.

The idea of shepherding the flock comes from the Greek word *poiman*. They are taught to *poimaino*, that is to feed, shepherd, and/or tend the church. This word deals with *how* elders do their work. Consider what a shepherd does in caring for his flock of sheep. Elders must teach or feed the flock. They are lead their sheep to green pasture. Thus, they must be "**apt to teach**," (1 Tim. 3:2). Elders "**hold fast the faithful word**," "**exhort in the sound doctrine**," and "**convict the gainsayers**," (Tit. 1:9). They must speak the word of God and admonish the brethren (Tit. 1:9; 1 The. 5:12). They must have a definite, planned, properly arranged system of teaching. They owe this to the church as God's good stewards.

Shepherds know their sheep and elders must know the flock. This was true of the Shepherd from which the figure is derived in John 10:2-5. Elders are our Lord's under shepherds and must exhibit the same care for the church as He did. In being attentive to the flock (Acts 20:28), elders must know the needs, capabilities, and opportunities of every member under their oversight.

Serving as shepherds means being a leader. Thus, elders must lead the flock. Notice John 10:3, a shepherd "**leadeth them out**." Elders are to be examples (Heb. 13:7; 1 Peter 5:3). They must be examples in their attitude toward the church and the lost. They must be examples in their personal life, in their own homes, at work, in their recreation, and wherever they are. Of course, they ought to be examples in the Lord's work by having a zeal for it, a steadfast work ethic, a sacrificial spirit, and men whose faith is always growing.

To be able leaders, shepherds must have good leadership qualities. This involves their wisdom, knowledge, and judgment regarding numerous matters pertaining to church members. They must know how to deal with the brethren—the humble, meek, proud, haughty, rebellious, unrepentant, faithful (strong and weak), economically (poor and rich), educated, uneducated, women, men, non-members, and the like. Elders must have unusual initiative in doing the will of God.

Shepherds are vigilant in watching over their flocks. They are watching because there are dangers (Acts 20:28-31). There is never a time when the church is not in danger—sometimes more than others. Peter and apostle and an elder wrote to the church warning, "**Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh**

**about, seeking whom he may devour**" (1 Pet. 5:8; Also see 2 Pet. 2:1-3). The devil is always vigilant in his work. Dangers come from outside the church and inside the church (Heb. 13:17; Tit. 1:9). Notice the Old Testament account of David's concern for his father's flock (1 Sam. 17:34, 35). Elders must have the same mind that David displayed in the previous passage if they are to do their work well. Some of the greatest dangers to the church are found within. Elders need to keep the church informed of errors throughout the churches or from wherever they come.

In keeping the church safe, discipline is required—both preventive and corrective. Because shepherds will not consistently and with regularity practice corrective church discipline to the point of leading the church to withdraw fellowship from rebellious sinning members, congregations embrace unrepentant church members, destroying the purity of the church and their own souls. If there are rotten deacons, members who are guilty of all sorts of sins, unfaithful preachers, who is ultimately and finally responsible for the church putting up with sin in its midst? If it is not the elders of the church, then who would it be? Yes, elders are to watch the members in their spiritual growth and development, both personal and congregationally with a view to keeping the church saved (Eze. 33:7-10).

Serving as shepherds means helping others. Notice that they are to "**help the weak**" (Acts 20:35), be "**given to hospitality**," and in general "**take care**" of the church of God (1 Tim. 3:15)

In bringing this study of what the elders owe the church to an end, we want to notice that there are negative aspects of elders' work. Peter tells us that elders are not to serve because they have been constrained to serve. This means they must not feel compelled to serve, or serve unwillingly. The negative comments are to give emphasis that one must desire to serve as an elder.

Elders do not serve for the money that is involved. However, this comment means that elders were supported (1 Tim. 5:17, 18; Also see 1 Cor. 9:14). But I know of few that have ever supported an elder to be full-time in tending the flock.

Elders are not to be "**lord's over God's heritage**" (1 Pet. 5:3). The idea that the church can think and say whatever about a matter, but the elders will do what they want to do regardless, smacks of a Diotrophean attitude. Elders are not all powerful dictators with no concern for the needs of those they oversee in their various capacities. Clearly being "**lord's over God's heritage**" does not contradict the teaching of Hebrews 13:17. Thus, Peter had in mind elders ruling to suit themselves with little to no concern about whose church it is that they shepherd. The church does not exist for the benefit of the elders, but the church belongs to Christ and elders are stewards of the Lord in caring for it according to the Lord's will.

Without the Lord's church there would be no elders to shepherd it. Elders owe it to themselves and the church they oversee to remember that. They are stewards of God and some day must give account to God for every soul that has been under their oversight (Heb. 13:17). That thought alone is, or ought to be, a sobering one for those who serve as elders.

It is our continual prayer and aim to help the church be what God desires it to be and that includes teaching the truth of the New Testament concerning what elders owe to the church they superintend. We conclude with the words of the peerless apostle Paul regarding his exemplary work among the brethren at Ephesus, including the elders, and the work of the Ephesian elders in their care for the Lord's church.

Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you

all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 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. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20: 26-35).

—David P. Brown, Editor



## ALL THAT MATTERS

Dub McClish

In Jesus' incomparable Sermon on the Mount, He said:

**Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Mat. 7:21–23).**

Herein we see a great and fundamental Truth: the vanity, presumptuousness, and danger of doing anything that Jehovah has not authorized. In His sweeping principle, the Lord embraced every doctrine and practice that constitute faithfulness

to God and His Son. If one is determined to “do all in the name of the Lord” (Col. 3:17), he will reject every doctrine and practice Jesus does not authorize in His New Testament (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

Jesus' statement demonstrates the insufficiency of several things upon which millions who profess belief in Christ are relying in religion. It is not enough to:

- Merely believe in (i.e., intellectually acknowledge) Christ
- Confess one's belief in Christ
- Prophesy or preach some religious message
- Perform religious works, even if they appear to be great
- Be sincere in one's religious doctrine or practice
- Be zealous in one's religious activity
- Merely “like” a doctrine or practice

# LET THE BIBLE SPEAK

TV Program presented by Spring Church of Christ

on *Houston Media Source*

View on:

AT & T U-verse Channel 99 ♦ Comcast Channel 17 ♦ TV Max Channel 95

Suddenlink Channel 99 ♦ Phonoscope Channel 75

or online at: [HMSTV.org](http://HMSTV.org)

Times will vary each week ♦ Check station listing for schedule





- Believe, do, or teach something because of its popularity

To merely speak the Lord's name over something we are doing does not equal His approval. The sons of Sceva quickly learned this to their own dismay and discomfort (Acts 19:14–16). Jesus' statement conclusively shows that God not only requires more than mere faith and its confession for salvation, but that He also requires more than mere works. If one's works are not the works God has authorized, they are all done in vain regarding God's notice or approval (Mat. 15:9). That which God does not authorize, He does not accept or recognize.

Jesus once asked the Jewish rulers, “**The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from men?**” (Mat. 21:25). In doing so, he exhausted all possibilities. The wicked Jews knew better than to argue that there was a third possible source of authority. Every doctrine and practice in religion is either authorized by God in His Word, or it is human in origin—and vain. All that matters is, does God authorize it?

*[Note: This article was written for and published in the Denton Record-Chronicle, Denton, TX, March 27, 2015]*

—908 Imperial Drive  
Denton, TX

**CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH RADIO**

24 hours a day ♦ 7 days a week

[www/contending4thefait.org](http://www.contending4thefait.org)

- ♦ Listen to Biblical Lessons
  - ⇒ Different programs with different speakers
  - ⇒ Various Biblical subjects studied
- ♦ Take an online Bible Study Course
  - ⇒ 27 Lessons
  - ⇒ Read online; submit answers online
  - ⇒ Assistance available when needed
- ♦ Compatible with mobile devices
  - ⇒ Instructions on website

## *Visit The Scripturecache Website!*

*Exposition, Exegesis, and Commentary on a variety of Bible Topics and Passages*

Over the past half-century-plus, I have had the opportunity to write hundreds of articles and manuscripts. My late beloved wife, Lavonne, and our son, Andy, have written a considerable body of material as well. These documents treating various Bible and Bible-related subjects total several thousand pages.



**Dub McClish**



**Lavonne McClish**



**Andy McClish**

At the urging of others we are making these materials more widely available than possible by printed media. Through our Website, these are accessible at no charge to Bible students everywhere. If the things we have written help even one person to a better understanding of the Sacred Text and to a closer relationship with its Divine Author, we will feel amply rewarded. Please visit *thescripturecache.com* soon. —**Dub McClish**

---

## DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES

### -Colorado-

**Denver**—Piedmont Church of Christ, 1602 S. Parker Rd. Ste. 109, Denver, CO 80231, Sunday: 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. [www.piedmontcoc.net](http://www.piedmontcoc.net), Lester Kamp, evangelist. (720) 989-8155.

### -England-

**Cambridgeshire**—Cambridge City Church of Christ, meeting at The Manor Community College, Arbury Rd., Cambridge, CB4 2JF. Sun., Bible Study--10:30 a.m., Worship-- 11:30 a.m.; Tue. Bible Study--7:30 p.m. [www.CambridgeCityCoC.org.uk](http://www.CambridgeCityCoC.org.uk). Contact: Inside the U.K.: Joan Moulton - 01223-210101; Postal/mailling Address - PO BOX 1, Ramsey Huntingdon, PE26 2YZ United Kingdom

### -Florida-

**Ocoee**—Ocoee Church of Christ, 2 East Magnolia Street, Ocoee, FL 34761. Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7:00 p.m. David Hartbarger, Evangelist, (407) 656-2516.

**Pensacola**—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Michael Hatcher, evangelist, (850) 455-7595. <http://www.bellviewcoc.com/>

### -Montana-

**Helena**—Mountain View Church of Christ, 1400 Joslyn Street, Helena, Mt. 59601, Sun.: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Matt Bidmead (406) 461-9199.

### -Oklahoma-

**Porum**—Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, evangelist, email: [allenlawson@earth-comm.com](mailto:allenlawson@earth-comm.com).

### -South Carolina-

**Belvedere (Greater Augusta, Georgia Area)**—Church of Christ, 535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841, [www.belvederechurchofchrist.org](http://www.belvederechurchofchrist.org); e-mail [belvecoc@gmail.com](mailto:belvecoc@gmail.com), (803) 442-6388, Sun.: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.,

### Texas

**Denton area**—Northpoint Church of Christ, 4224 N. I-35 (Greenway Plaza, just north of Cracker Barrel). Mailing address: 4224 N. I-35, Denton, TX 76207. E-mail: [northpointcoc@hotmail.com](mailto:northpointcoc@hotmail.com). Website: [www.northpointcoc.com](http://www.northpointcoc.com). Sunday: 9:30, 10:30, 1:00; Wednesday 7:00. Contact: Dub McClish: (940) 218-2892; [dubmclish@gmail.com](mailto:dubmclish@gmail.com).

**Houston area**—Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, (281) 353-2707. Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., David P. Brown, evangelist. Home of the Spring *Contending for the Faith* Lectures. [www.churchesofchrist.com](http://www.churchesofchrist.com).

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. Huntsville, TX 77320. Sun. 9 a. m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (936) 438-8202.

**Richwood**—1600 Brazosport, Richwood, TX. Sun. 9:30; 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (979) 265-4256.

**San Antonio/Seguin Area**—Nockenut Church of Christ, 2559 FM 1681, Stockdale, TX 78160, Sun. 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., [nktchurchofchrist.org](http://nktchurchofchrist.org)