

ATTITUDES
about
BIBLE
AUTHORITY

By Charles Willis

ATTITUDES about BIBLE AUTHORITY

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A 2022 Gallop Poll found “A record-low 20% of Americans now say the Bible is the literal word of God, down from 24% the last time the question was asked in 2017, and half of what it was at its high points in 1980 and 1984. Meanwhile, a new high of 29% say the Bible is a collection of “fables, legends, history and moral precepts recorded by man.” This marks the first time significantly more Americans have viewed the Bible as not divinely inspired than as the literal word of God.”
(gallup.com/poll/394262/fewer-bible-literal-word-god.aspx accessed 8.15.2024)

1. The Bible says it is the Word of God.

A. Tell what “inspiration” is, and explain the meaning in 2 Timothy 3:16–17.

B. How did inspiration happen?

2 Peter 1:20–21; Hebrews 3:7

1 Corinthians 2:6–13; 2 Peter 3:15–16

Exodus 34:27

Daniel 7:1

John 14:26; 16:13

Revelation 1:1–3

C. How did Jesus view the Word of God?

Matthew 4:4; 4:10; 5:18; 21:13; 26:31; Luke 22:37; 24:44–46; John 6:45

John 17:17

John 5:39

Matthew 19:3–6

D. What do we learn about God’s word from 1 Peter 1:22–25?

2. Prophecies Came True. Hebrews 1:1 “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets...”

A. Matthew 1:22–23 (Isaiah 7:14)

B. Mark 12:35–37 (Matthew 22:41–46)

C. Jeremiah 1:4, 13–16; 4:14–19

D. Daniel 2:31–44

E. Isaiah 44:28; Jeremiah 25:11–12 ; Ezra 1:1–4

F. Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18–23

3. The Bible reveals knowledge man did not have.

A. Job 26:7

B. Isaiah 40:22

C. Psalm 8:8; Job 38:16

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1. What Old Testament evidence can you see?
- A. Psalm 33:6
 - B. Isaiah 45:7–9
 - C. Job 1:12; 2:6
 - D. Daniel 2:21; 4:17; 4:34–35
2. What New Testament evidence can you see?
- A. 1 Timothy 3:16
 - B. Rom 13:1–2
 - C. 1 Timothy 2:5–6
 - D. Colossians 1:13
 - E. 1 Corinthians 11:3
 - F. Ephesians 1:11
3. Point to the wording in each passage that shows how God gives authority to others.
- A. Moses: Exodus 4:1–9
- B. Prophets:
- 1. 1 Samuel 3:19–21
 - 2. Daniel 1:17, 2:19
 - 3. 2 Kings 2:9–14
- C. Apostles:
- 1. Acts 1:8; 2 Peter 3:1–2
 - 2. 1 Thessalonians 2:13
 - 3. Galatians 1:1, 11–12
 - 4. Acts 26:17–18
 - 5. 2 Corinthians 5:20–21
 - 6. 1 Corinthians 14:37
- D. Jesus:
- 1. Matthew 9:6–8
 - 2. Matthew 11:27
 - 3. John 3:35
 - 4. John 13:3
 - 5. John 17:2
 - 6. Luke 10:22
 - 7. Ephesians 1:20–22
 - 8. Philippians 2:9–10
 - 9. 1 Peter 3:22
 - 10. Matthew 28:18
 - 11. 1 Corinthians 15:27–28
 - 12. John 10:18
- E. Holy Spirit: John 16:13

4. What were God's rules for prophets and stating His word?
 - A. 2 Peter 1:21; Jeremiah 1:2 (Joel 1:1; Jonah 1:1; many others)
 - B. 1 Kings 22:14
 - C. 1 Kings 18:36
 - D. Jeremiah 1:9
 - E. Deuteronomy 18:15–22
 - F. Amos 3:7
 - G. Jeremiah 35:14–15
5. What has God said about changing His word?
 - A. Deuteronomy 4:2
 - B. 2 John 1:9–11
6. Point to the wording in each passage that shows how God expects obedience to His word.
 - A. Genesis 2:15–17
 - B. Genesis 19:17, 26
 - C. Exodus 39:20–23
 - D. 2 Samuel 6:1–7
 - E. Jeremiah 9:13–16
 - F. Jonah 1:1–17
 - G. Galatians 6:7–8
 - H. Matthew 7:21–23
 - I. 2 Thessalonians 1:6–9

1. What is the importance of authority (Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 4:11; Colossians 3:17; 1 John 2:3–6)?

2. Authority Is Gained From Commands
 - A. What does God say about commands?
 1. Deuteronomy 6:1–2
 2. Deuteronomy 28:9–14, 45
 - B. What is the difference between a specific command and a generic command? Try to provide one example of each.
 - C. Identify the command(s) from the following passages.

1. Genesis 2:16	5. Acts 14:23
2. Genesis 6:13–16	6. 1 Corinthians 16:1–2
3. Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24	7. Ephesians 5:19
4. Acts 2:38	

- C. What authority did the Apostles have (Acts 10:33; 2 Thessalonians 3:14; 2 Timothy 1:13)?

3. Authority Is Gained From Approved Examples
 - A. How is Paul an example (Philippians 3:17, 4:9; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 11:1; 2 Timothy 1:13)?
 - B. What authority is gained from Acts 20:7?
 - C. What authority is gained from 2 Corinthians 11:8–9?

4. Authority Is Gained From A Necessary Inference
 - A. Explain what a necessary inference is.
 - B. What necessary inference did Peter make in Acts 10:34–35?
 - C. What necessary inference do we make from Matthew 26:17 about partaking of the Lord's Supper?

5. Working Without Authority

A. What does Scripture tell us about looking to men for authority?

1. Jeremiah 10:23

4. Romans 12:3

2. Colossians 2:20-23

5. 1 Corinthians 4:6

3. Matthew 15:9

6. Matthew 21:23ff

B. What is the result of not having authority?

1. Matthew 7:21-23

2. 1 John 3:4

3. 2 John 9; Matthew 7:24-27

4. Galatians 1:8-9

For each of the following, study the Scriptures and be prepared to state what their attitude was about the Word of God.

1. Noah

A. Genesis 6:9

D. Genesis 8:13–20

B. Genesis 6:14–22

E. Hebrews 11:7

C. Genesis 7:1–5

2. Abraham

A. Genesis 12:1; Hebrews 11:8

D. Genesis 17:9–27

B. Genesis 12:7; 24:7

E. Genesis 21:1–5

C. Genesis 15:2–6

F. Genesis 22:1–19; Hebrews 11:17–19

3. Moses

A. Hebrews 11:24–27

E. Exodus 25:2, 9; 25:40; 26:30; 40:12–33; Acts 7:44

B. Exodus 3:2, 3:10; 4:20; 4:27–5:1; Acts 7:36

F. Deuteronomy 31:1–6

C. Hebrews 11:28–29

G. Deuteronomy 31:19–22

D. Exodus 25:2, 9; 25:40; 26:30; 40:12–33; Acts 7:44

4. Joshua

A. Joshua 4:1–18

C. Joshua 6:1–21; Hebrews 11:30

B. Joshua 5:2–9

D. Joshua 23:6–8; 24:14–15

5. The Prophets

A. Samuel (1 Samuel 8:4–22; 12:12–18; 15:1–3, 32)

C. Daniel 1:8; chapter 2 (especially verse 45); 9:1–3

B. Elijah (1 Kings 18:20–46)

D. Jeremiah 26:12–15

6. Nehemiah 8:1–8

7. David

A. 1 Chronicles 14:8–16

B. 2 Samuel 6:1–11 and 1 Chronicles 15:1–3, 11–15

8. The Apostles

A. Peter (Acts 3:18–26; Acts 10:17–20, 23, 28–29; 1 Peter 1:23–25; 2 Peter 1:16–21)

B. Paul (1 Timothy 1:3–4; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; Titus 1:2; Titus 2:1, 7; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; Colossians 1:23)

C. John (1 John 2:3–4; 2:18–24; 4:1–6)

9. Jesus

A. John 12:48–50

B. John 17:17

C. Matthew 19:4; 22:31; Mark 12:10, 26

D. Matthew 4:4, 7, 10; 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 22:37; Luke 24:46

E. Matthew 7:21–23

F. John 10:35

G. Luke 11:28; Mark 3:35

10. Bereans (Acts 17:11)

11. Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

For each of the following, study the Scriptures and be prepared to state what their attitude was about the Word of God.

1. Israel

A. Exodus 19:3–9; 32:1–10

B. Numbers 12:1–15

C. Numbers 16:1–11, 28–35

D. 1 Kings 11:29–38; 12:25–33; 14:7–9, 15–16

E. 2 Kings 17:6–18

F. 2 Kings 17:19–20; Jeremiah 3:6–11, 25

2. The Pharisees

A. Mark 7:1–13; parallel passage in Matthew 15:1–9

B. Matthew 23:13–33

3. Diotrophes (3rd John)

4. In Galatia

A. 1:6–9

B. 5:3–4

5. Romans 1:18–32

6. 2 Timothy 4:3–4

7. Revelation 2:18–21

8. 2 Peter 2:1–3

For each example, state their opinion and the consequences of not listening to God.

1. Abram and Sarah (Genesis 16:1–4, 15–16; 17:15–21)

 2. Nadab and Abihu (Exodus 24:1, 9–11; 28:1; Leviticus 10:1–2)

 3. Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:28–38; 12:25–33; 14:7–9, 14–16)

 4. Israel
 - A. Deuteronomy 7:1–4; Joshua 23:8–13; Ezra 9:1–5; 10:10–12, 44; Nehemiah 13:23–29

 - B. Deuteronomy 1:26–28; 9:23; Numbers 14:3

 - C. Numbers 14:1–4; Exodus 16:3; Jeremiah 42:1–6, 19–22; 43:1–7; 44:12–19

 5. Saul (1 Samuel 15:1–31)

 6. Naaman (2 Kings 5:9–14)

 7. Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:16–21)
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For each example, state their opinion and the consequences of not listening to God.

1. Corinth

A. 1 Corinthians 1:10–13; 3:1–4

B. 1 Corinthians 4:1–6

C. 1 Corinthians 5:1–2, 9–11

D. 1 Corinthians 8:1–13

2. About Divorce and Remarriage (Matthew 19:1–12; 1 Corinthians 7:39)

3. Saul (Acts 8:1–3; 9:1–5; 22:4–5; 26:9–11; 1 Corinthians 15:9)

4. Sadducees (Matthew 22:23–32)

5. Samaritans (John 4:20–24)

6. Colossians 2:8, 16–3:2

What does God warn us about? What should we learn?

1. Deuteronomy 30:15–20
 2. Ezekiel 13:1–8
 3. Jeremiah 17:27
 4. Jeremiah 35:17
 5. Galatians 1:6–9; 3:1, 10; 5:1–10
 6. Ephesians 4:11–14
 7. John 12:48
 8. 1 Timothy 6:3–5
 9. 2 Peter 2:1–3
 10. 2 John 9–11
 11. 2 Peter 3:16 twist scripture to own destruction
 12. 2 Thessalonians 1:8–9
 13. Romans 2:5–13
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For each example, provide Bible references that demonstrate the violation of God's authority.

1. Catholicism (From the online Catholic Catechism located at: usccb.cld.bz/Catechism-of-the-Catholic-Church which I acceded 9.19–20.2024)
 - A. “As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, “does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence” (Catholic Catechism, page 26 point #81)
 - B. “Amongst those various offices which have been exercised in the Church from the earliest times the chief place, according to the witness of tradition, is held by the function of those who, through their appointment to the dignity and responsibility of bishop, and in virtue consequently of the unbroken succession going back to the beginning, are regarded as transmitters of the apostolic line.” (Catholic Catechism, page 389, point#1555). “To fulfill their exalted mission, “the apostles were endowed by Christ with a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit coming upon them, and by the imposition of hands they passed on to their auxiliaries the gift of the Spirit, which is transmitted down to our day through episcopal consecration.” (Catholic Catechism, page 389, point#1556). “Episcopal consecration confers, together with the office of sanctifying, also the offices of teaching and ruling. . . . In fact . . . by the imposition of hands and through the words of the consecration, the grace of the Holy Spirit is given, and a sacred character is impressed in such wise that bishops, in an eminent and visible manner, take the place of Christ himself, teacher, shepherd, and priest, and act as his representative (in Eius persona agant).” “By virtue, therefore, of the Holy Spirit who has been given to them, bishops have been constituted true and authentic teachers of the faith and have been made pontiffs and pastors.” (Catholic Catechism, page 389, point#1558). “As Christ’s vicar, each bishop has the pastoral care of the particular Church entrusted to him, but at the same time he bears collegially with all his brothers in the episcopacy the solicitude for all the Churches: “Though each bishop is the lawful pastor only of the portion of the flock entrusted to his care, as a legitimate successor of the apostles he is, by divine institution and precept, responsible with the other bishops for the apostolic mission of the Church.” (Catholic Catechism, page 390, point#1560)
 - C. “Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death.” (Catholic Catechism, page 272, point #966) “The Fathers of the Eastern tradition call the Mother of God “the All-Holy” (Panagia), and celebrate her as “free from any stain of sin, as though fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature.” By the grace of God Mary remained free of every personal sin her whole life long.” (Catholic Catechism, page 124, point 493). The Council of Trent, decreed in 1546 AD, “The doctrine of the conception of all men in sin was not intended to include the Virgin.” *Following are excerpts from the Rosary Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary:* Queen of angels, pray for us. Queen of patriarchs, pray for us. Queen of prophets, pray for us. Queen of apostles, pray for us. Queen of martyrs, pray for us. Queen of confessors, pray for us. Queen of virgins, pray for us. Queen of all saints, pray for us. Queen conceived without Original Sin, pray for us. Queen assumed into Heaven, pray for us. Queen of the most holy Rosary, pray for us. Queen of families, pray for us. Queen of peace, pray for us... Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord God, that we Thy Servants may enjoy perpetual health of mind and body and by the glorious intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, be delivered from present sorrow and enjoy eternal happiness. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.” (wikipedia.org/wiki/Litany_of_the_Blessed_Virgin_Mary - accessed 9.20.2024)

D. McKinnon noted a “polemic” of the “church fathers” against musical instruments during and after the third and fourth centuries because they were “a symbol of lasciviousness and debauchery” (The Church Fathers and Musical Instruments [Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University], p.2). “Pope Vitalianus in 658 introduced the organ into the Roman churches to accompany the singers.” (London Encyclopedia, Vol. 15, p. 280). “According to Plating (‘De vitis Pontificum’, Cologne, 1593), Pope Vitalian (657-72) introduced the organ into the church service. This, however, is very doubtful. At all events, a strong objection to the organ in church service remained pretty general down to the twelfth century, which may be accounted for partly by the imperfection of tone in organs of that time. But from the twelfth century on, the organ became the privileged church instrument . . .” (Catholic Encyclopedia [1913 edition], Vol. XI, pp. 300-301). *Yet even then there was negative responses. A Catholic priest wrote:* “Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize.” (Thomas Aquinas, Bingham’s Antiquities, vol. 3, p. 137).” Heinrich Bullinger was a leader in the reformation movement in the 1500’s. “Since they also are not in accord with the apostle’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 14, the organs in the great cathedral of Zurich were demolished on the 9th of December in this year of 1527.” (Heinrich Bullinger, Reformations Geschichte, vol. 1, p. 418). John Marbeck “former organist of St. George’s Chapel, Windsor, wrote in 1550, “But when they haunt their holy assemblies, I think that musical instruments are no more meet for the setting forth of God’s praises, than if a man shall call again censuring and lamps, and such other shadows of the law. Foolishly therefore have the Papists borrowed this and many other things of the Jews. Men that are given to outward pomps delight in such noise, but God liketh better the simplicity which he commendeth to us by his Apostle...” (A Book of Notes and Common Places (1550), pp. 754-755).

2. Premillennialism, in Christian eschatology, is the belief that Jesus will physically return to the Earth (the Second Coming) before the Millennium, heralding a literal thousand-year messianic age of peace. Premillennialism is based upon a literal interpretation of Revelation 20:1–6 in the New Testament, which describes Jesus’s reign in a period of a thousand years. (wikipedia.org/wiki/Premillennialism, Accessed 9.20.2024). *There are many differing views and concepts referred to as premellennialism. Most modern denominations hold to one form of this or another.*

3. Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531) was the first well-known theologian who started teaching salvation by faith alone. By his own admission, he went against almost 1,500 years of Bible teachings and beliefs when he taught salvation by faith alone, claiming that teachers “have been in error since the apostles.” (Bromiley, G. W., ed. Zwingli and Bullinger. Westminster John Knox Press, 1953, 119–175). “We believe that salvation is only found by placing our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.” (www.lakewoodchurch.com/about). “We receive this gift through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ alone” (Second Baptist Church of Houston - www.second.org/who-we-are/our-beliefs/).

4. The five points of Calvinism can be remembered using the acronym TULIP, which stands for: Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, and Perseverance of the saints.
 - A. Total Depravity: Through the Fall of Man, humanity is stained by sin in every aspect: heart, emotions, will, mind, and body. This means people cannot independently choose God. They cannot save themselves. God must intervene to save people. Calvinism insists that God must do all the work.

B. Unconditional Election: This Calvinist view says God chooses who will be saved. Because people are dead in their sins, (Total Depravity) they are unable to initiate a response to God. God elects certain people to be saved (called the Elect). God picks them based on His kindness and Sovereign will and not on their personal character or merit.

C. Limited Atonement: Limited atonement is the view that Jesus Christ died only for the sins of the Elect.

D. Irresistible Grace: The belief that God brings his Elect to salvation through an internal call, which they are powerless to resist. The Holy Spirit supplies grace to them until they repent and are born again.

E. Perseverance of the Saints: the Elect cannot lose their salvation. Because salvation is the work of God the Father; Jesus Christ, the Savior; and the Holy Spirit, it cannot be thwarted. None whom God has called will be lost, they are eternally secure.

5. Speaking in tongues is the only absolute proof a Christian has that he is born again and guaranteed everlasting life in Paradise. (thelivingtruthfellowship.org/speaking-in-tongues/speaking-in-tongues/ [accessed 9.23.2024]). *This is a belief held by Pentecostal denominations.*
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For each example, provide Bible references that demonstrate the violation of God's authority.

1. From without:

A. Organization of the Church

- A Christian **denomination** is a distinct religious body within Christianity that comprises all church congregations of the same kind, identifiable by traits such as a name, particular history, organization, leadership, theological doctrine, worship style and, sometimes, a founder. It is a secular and neutral term, generally used to denote any established Christian church. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_denomination [accessed 9.23.2024])
- **Satellite locations** (One congregation supposedly located in multiple locations. Such as the Second Baptist church of Houston with 6 locations [www.second.org/locations])
- Baptists declare the office of **pastor** is one of two that a church patterned after New Testament churches should have. The Bible uses three words for the same office: elder, pastor and bishop. In the Greek language of the New Testament, these words indicate different functions and not different persons (Acts 20:17-28; 1 Peter 5:1-5). Baptists look to the Bible for the qualifications for persons to serve as pastor (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). The qualifications fall generally into two categories—character and gifts for ministry. The office of pastor should be used to serve others, not in selfish or self-promoting ways. Each Baptist church selects (calls) the person to be its pastor. (www.baptistdistinctives.org/resources/articles/two-church-officers-pastors-and-deacons [accessed 9.23.2024])

B. Church Sponsored Entertainment

- Christmas plays and music concerts (tickets charged)
- The Worship assembly is changed for a children's choir concert, or some traveling group performance
- The Second Baptist Church of Houston lists the following under "events."
 - > Registration is now open for SecondKids Soccer at North campus! This league is for children ages 4 through 12 years (PreK4-6th grades). The season runs September 9th-October 26th...All coaches are volunteers, please indicate during player registration to volunteer! Player jersey, shorts, and socks are provided. (second.org/events [accessed 9.23.2024]).
 - > 4th and 5th graders – Grab your nerf gun and join us for a night of epic nerf battles, games, prizes, and tons of fun! Will your team be victorious? Cost: \$15
- epicministries.com states: Here at EPIC, our vision is to glorify God by creating fun, memorable experiences through positive entertainment and exceptional service. We are passionate about entertaining experiences, engaging education, and global evangelism. Our church entertainers want to serve you and support your ministry so that together we can share the Good News of Jesus Christ with our world. They then list "Church Shows" and "School Outreach."

C. A belief and teaching that there is more than One Church (all called Christians) holding to different plans of salvation.

D. Children's Church (offered at www.bearcreek.church/children [in Katy, Tx.]; impacthoustonchurch.org/kids [at Impact Church of Christ in Houston]; www.championforest.org/guide/kids/children [Champion Forest Baptist Church]; and many others.

E. Saturday Worship Assemblies (with Lord's Supper)

2. From our midst:

A. Hell is oblivion. (What follows is from en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Fudge [accessed 9.23.2024])

- Fudge was raised by devout parents. His mother was the child of missionaries to southern Africa, and his father was a Christian publisher and a minister in Churches of Christ. He received bachelor's and master's degrees at Abilene Christian University and completed law school at the University of Houston College of Law. Fudge was raised in non-institutional Churches of Christ, attending Florida College before transferring to Abilene Christian. After completing his master's in Biblical languages from Abilene, Fudge ministered for non-institutional Churches of Christ in St. Louis and Athens, Alabama. Fudge then moved to Houston, Texas, where he lived until his death on November 25, 2017.
- Edward William Fudge (July 13, 1944 – November 25, 2017) was an American Christian theologian and lawyer, best known for his book *The Fire That Consumes* in which he argues for an annihilationist Biblical interpretation of Hell. He has been called “one of the foremost scholars on hell” by *The Christian Post*. He is the subject of the 2012 independent film *Hell and Mr. Fudge*.
- *The Fire That Consumes* was first published in 1982. Fudge argues that the doctrine of hell as eternal, conscious torment was not a necessary corollary of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. (*He teaches the condemned pass into oblivion rather than torment. C. L. Willis*)

B. Instrumental Music In Worship (Excerpts from www.USAToday.com/story/news/nation/2015/03/06/church-of-christ-instrumental-music/24499691 dated March 6, 2015)

- A Nashville-area church is starting something radical — at least by Church of Christ standards — allowing musical instruments at one of its Sunday services. It's such a switch for Otter Creek Church, a 1,800-member traditionally acappella congregation, that its leadership team spent months deciding a strategy and will take months more putting it in place.
- About 20 of 12,000 Church of Christ congregations nationwide offer instrumental music, said Carl H. Royster, author of a survey published by Nashville-based 21st Century Christian publishers. The first handful started making the change about a decade ago, including popular megachurch leader Max Lucado's Oak Hills Church in San Antonio. Some faced backlash from other congregations. Even now, 13 years after *The Branch*, a multicampus Church of Christ congregation in Dallas, introduced instrumental music, Google searches on it and senior minister Chris Seidman yield scathing denunciations. “A lot of churches from our heritage cut us off,” said Seidman, whom Otter Creek leaders consulted leading up to this week's announcement. “But the larger Churches of Christ, they were actually very firm in embracing us.”
- ... In Music City, the appeal of instrumental music is undeniable. Graves said his church has no intention of alienating other congregations, only of better connecting to the community in Nashville and Brentwood. Otter Creek, where the congregation's average age is 27, already experimented with instrumental music in a Wednesday vespers service; young adult, children's ministry, and student ministry gatherings; and special worship for Good Friday, Christmas and other holidays.
- Beginning in September, one of the two Sunday services will feature instruments.

C. Benevolence for all - the social gospel

- Southwest Church of Christ in Chesterfield Virginia - swcoc.net/benevolence (accessed 9.23.2024). Southwest Church of Christ's Benevolence Program seeks to address spiritual as well as financial needs. We prioritize benevolence requests as follows: Requests from our brothers and sisters in Christ. Galatians 6:10 tells us to “...do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” Requests from those who live near our church building. Those living nearby are better able and, therefore, more likely to visit our building and worship with us. The ultimate outcome is to lead people to know Christ as their Lord and Savior by establishing

D. Support of institutions from treasury: orphan homes, radio broadcasts, universities, disaster relief, Missionary Societies

- February 10, 1952, the ABC network began to carry a broadcast introduced by, “The churches of Christ salute you with the Herald of Truth.” Highland church has appealed to the churches through the mail, by telephone, and personal contact, for funds to do this magnificent work. (Quoted from The Gospel Guardian - www.wordsfittlyspoken.org/gospel_guardian/v5/v5n34p8-10a.html [accessed 9.23.2024]). *My father, and W.R.Jones both stated to me that men were sent out from the Highland congregation all over the country pleading and teaching of the need to support this work (C.L. Willis)*
- The international radio-television operation called Herald of Truth is, perhaps, the most notable example of the kind of “church cooperation” which has divided hundreds of churches of Christ in recent years. (The orphan asylum issue is not the only divisive one, contrary to what many people may have been led to believe.) The powerful concentration of the resources of literally thousands of congregations in one central eldership, such as Highland church elders in Abilene, poses an even greater threat to the identity of simple New Testament churches...(since September, 1951) until now the Highland elders have bombarded the entire brotherhood with a steady begging campaign to make this combination bigger and bigger. Each year they have asked congregations for more and more donations. There seems to be no limit to the plans they have made for the churches over the country to support. In various ingenious ways they have projected their highly organized system into churches throughout the nation.
- *This gave way to many debates across the country about the use of the Lord’s treasury to support institutions of men. Today the overwhelming number of congregations calling themselves a “Church of Christ” regularly support institutions from the treasury. (C.L. Willis)*

E. Sponsoring Churches

- Not long after World War 2, members of the Lord’s church decided they wanted to take the gospel over seas to the countries with whom we had been at war. This was a good attitude to have. Especially since we are supposed to spread the gospel to everyone. Paul wrote to commend the church in Thessalonica, “For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything” (I Thessalonians 1:8). The church needs to be spreading the gospel. One big problem arose, however. Some churches couldn’t fully support a preacher who decided to go overseas. So, elders or members of one church told other churches to send them what they could, and they would, in turn, use the funds to support a preacher (or preachers) overseas. This seemed reasonable because it made it so the preacher didn’t have to request help from multiple churches. He only had to request help from a “sponsoring” church. (www.lavistachurchofchrist.org/cms/the-sponsoring-church-arrangement-2 [accessed 9.23.2024]).
- When you talk about the sponsoring church arrangement, you just erase the words “institutional board” and you put in here instead of a “sponsoring eldership”. The elders had become overseers of a work of many churches of Christ to which all of these churches were equally related. (www.lavistachurchofchrist.org/cms/the-sponsoring-church-arrangement-what-was-the-issue [accessed 9.23.2024]).