

# The Christian Courier

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“Literary Voice of the Historical National Lectureship”

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## Churches of Christ “Historical” Annual National Lectureship “If the Foundations be Destroyed, What Can the Righteous Do?” (Psalm 11:3)

The Executive Committee of the Church of Christ Annual “Historical” National Lectureship welcomes everyone to the 79th Annual National Lectureship in Atlanta, Georgia. It is without doubt, that the theme which has been selected: “*If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*” speaks volumes to the tenor and times of our brotherhood.

The Churches of Christ among African Americans are once again called upon to contend with several matters of concern which attempt to challenge the foundations and core tenets of New Testament doctrine.

For example, discussions have taken place among some in regards to the *faux pas* and pseudo proposal of mechanical instruments of music being sanctioned biblically in New Testament corporate worship.

Notwithstanding, there is this fallacious heretical ideology of the New Testament Church of Christ along with the so-called Christian Church worshipping and fellowshiping together under the nefarious proposition of “unity” centered upon the Restoration Movement.

Let it be clearly understood that allegations and assertions such as these are not new collaborations or polemical quandaries within the constituency of African American Churches of Christ; conversely, they are decades old diatribes.

One of the major problems is that most young preachers today are bereft and benign of the rich heritage surrounding the African American Church of Christ along

with the many sacrifices that have been made on behalf of the visible Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The African American Church of Christ owes a monumental debt and a tremendous amount of gratitude to the initial first wave of pioneer preachers such as G. P. Bowser, Marshall Keeble, Levi Kennedy, Jr., Paul Silas Settles, R. N. Hogan, J. S. Winston, T. H. Busby, Luke Miller and G. E. Steward.

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Other legendary gospel preachers include G. P. Holt, Nokomis Yeldell, Humphrey Foutz, John Henry Clay, Shelton Gibbs, Jr., Dr. Roosevelt Wells, Dr. Jack Evans, Dr. Robert M. Woods, John O. Williams, Dr. Eugene Lawton, and Dr. James O. Maxwell, These men and many others mentored and molded our brotherhood. We grateful to have a few ‘Living Legends’ still with us in the persons of Dr. W. F. Washington, Dr. Daniel Harrison, Dr. David Jones, and Dr. Carl C. Baccus.

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A more recent aberration to the adherence and veracity of revealed biblical truth in the Western context is the philosophy of postmodernism. This reprehensible, revolting, and repulsive ideology in opposition to New Testament Christianity has infiltrated the mindsets of a few African American Church of Christ preachers (further comments about this are in the following pages).

Postmodernism has an endemic aversion to biblical factualness and it is precommitted to relativism or pluralism in relation to questions of truth. Simply put, in the context of Christianity, postmodernism says “absolute truth does not exist and all truth is relative.”

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Should the visible Kingdom of Jesus Christ, the New Testament Church of Christ, succumb to the cultural pressure of postmodernism and relativism by falsely declaring that the Church is now “emerging?”

Should the visible Kingdom of Jesus Christ, the New Testament Church of Christ, abandon its biblical “posture” regarding the sinfulness of



**W. F. Washington, Ph.D.**  
Executive Committee Chairman

mechanical instruments of music being employed in New Testament corporate worship under the pretext that the Church is now “emerging?”

Should the visible Kingdom of Jesus Christ, the New Testament Church of Christ, surrender to the cultural pressure of postmodernism by accepting that revealed truth as pronounced in the Scripture is not absolute truth based on the premise that the Church is now “emerging?”

Should the visible Kingdom of Jesus Christ, the New Testament Church of Christ, subscribe to the cultural pressure of postmodernism by attempting to foster worship and fellowship with “all” denominational churches under the perfidious aegis that the Church is now “emerging?”

The point is that Jesus Christ petitions His Church to be a Church “in” culture but not “of” culture. (Σ)

“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”



## Churches of Christ 79th “Historical” Annual National Lectureship Dedicated to the Late Honorable Dr. Andrew Jasper Hairston, Esq.

The 79th Annual “Historical” National Lectureship takes great pride in recognizing the late A. J. Hairston, a pioneer for equal justice and social change.

Hairston was the 13th of 15 children born near Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He was the first in his family to attend college and before completing his formal education he had earned almost as many degrees as he has siblings when including his honorary doctorates.

Dr. Hairston lived a life filled with numerous accomplishments. For more than 55 years he served as Senior Ministering Evangelist to the Simpson Street Church of Christ in Atlanta, Georgia, and more than 20 years as a Chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserves. He also served as an attorney, Assistant Solicitor General in Fulton County Georgia, City Solicitor of Atlanta, Georgia, and 23 years as a Judge of Atlanta City Court; several as Chief Judge.

Hairston earned degrees at Southwestern Christian College, Paul Quinn College, Brite Seminary at Texas Christian University, John Marshall Law School, Woodrow Wilson College of Law, Emory University, and the University of Nevada at Reno.

According to Dr. Hairston, his decision to attend college was at the behest of his oldest sister, Anna. His choices among Church of Christ affiliated institutions were limited due to racial segregation. The first college he attended, Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas, was established as an institution for African Americans in 1948. Later, he entered Brite Seminary shortly after Texas Christian University was integrated. He served in ministry with two congregations in Texas while attending college there, met and married his late wife Jeanne, and then he heard about a vacancy at Simpson Street in Atlanta.

Working toward social change was something that attracted him to Simpson Street; a Church on the

western edge of downtown Atlanta that formed shortly after Evangelist Marshall Keeble preached there in what was then known as the “mud hole.” It is Atlanta’s oldest African American Church of Christ.

Hairston stated, “I wanted to get involved with Civil Rights and I became deeply involved in the Movement. Although I never did a lot of preaching on Civil Rights as such, I would at times deal with it from the standpoint of righteousness and then get my folk involved in the action.” Hairston made sure the Simpson Street congregation was aware of his interest in Civil Rights before accepting the position.

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It was a very crucial time in the nation’s history and Atlanta proved pivotal. Hairston worked with many leaders of the Civil Rights Movement such as Fred C. Bennette, Jr., Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the Honorable Fred D. Gray. Hairston also served with key organizations such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Concerned Black Clergy of Metropolitan Atlanta, and Operation Breadbasket.

Hairston helped to establish the Concerned Black Clergy because of and in response to the murders of at least 23 children in Atlanta from 1979 to 1981. He said a unified response was something people of all faiths could agree on. The organization still meets and works to help resolve social issues affecting African Americans.

It is known throughout the African American Churches of Christ that a predominantly white board of trustees’ decision to close Nashville Christian Institute in 1967 and give its final assets of almost \$500,000 to nearby David Lipscomb College (now Lipscomb University) is what drove a wedge between

the Black and white Churches of Christ. It was the Honorable Fred D. Gray, Esq., an alumnus of Nashville Christian Institute who filed a lawsuit in 1967 but lost.

In June 1968, Simpson Street hosted a race relations workshop to discuss unequal situations among Churches of Christ. It was attended by about 50 influential leaders both Black and white. Dr. Hairston opened the forum gathering by addressing the topic: “Spiritual Equality in Christ.”

At the conclusion of the forum, most delegates signed a statement confessing “the sin of racial prejudice which existed in Churches of Christ and church-related institutions and businesses.” The statement recommended measures to promote racial healing. Despite this, a long period of separation followed when there was very little progress toward unity in the Churches of Christ.

The next national forum to discuss the issue of race relations in the Churches of Christ occurred 31 years later at Abilene Christian University. Hairston, then serving as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for Southwestern Christian College attended this gathering as well serving as a keynote speaker. Hairston spoke frankly about the pain of racial discrimination in the Churches of Christ. Although at one time he listened devotedly to the national broadcast “Herald of Truth” programs earlier in his career, Hairston knew his voice would not be heard on the show. This was because each of the speakers were white and regardless of his skills or reputation as a Church of Christ preacher and social activist, he was Black.

At that 1999 symposium, ACU’s then-president Royce Money, pledged to formally apologize for ACU’s past discrimination in admissions (ACU did not admit African Americans to all of its programs until 1965). Money followed through on this promise in person a few months later in Terrell at Southwestern Christian College.

There are two signs representative of social change located just outside the Simpson Street Church of Christ in Atlanta. First, a municipal street sign commemorating Hairston’s ministry with the Church, his service to Atlanta, and the cause of Civil Rights. Second, there is a corner street sign that reads “Andrew J. Hairston Boulevard.” The Honorable Andrew Jasper Hairston Atlanta’s first Black Chief Magistrate Judge passed away peacefully on the morning of January 14, 2025, a little more than 63 years after he preached his first sermon for the Simpson Street Church of Christ in Atlanta, Georgia.

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*Hairston spoke frankly about the pain of racial discrimination in the Churches of Christ.*

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Therefore, be it known and be it resolved, that the Executive Committee with Dr. W. F. Washington who serves as Executive Committee Chairman for the Churches of Christ “Historical” National Lectureship, dedicates the “2025 Churches of Christ ‘Historical’ National Lectureship” to the eminent and Honorable Dr. Andrew J. Hairston, Esq., a certified “Crusader for Christ” in the “Collective Community of Christendom” and late Minister Emeritus of the Simpson Street Church of Christ in Atlanta, Georgia. (Σ)



**The Late Honorable Judge Andrew J. Hairston, Esq. “Human/Civil Rights Icon”**

## The Churches of Christ 79th “Historical” Annual National Lectureship Welcomes You to the City of Atlanta, Georgia

**D**ear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, we are thrilled to welcome you to the city of Atlanta, Georgia, for the “Churches of Christ 79th Annual ‘Historical’ National Lectureship.”

The Lectureship will convene April 12-17, 2025. Our plan is to salute and give recognition to the Honorable Dr. Andrew J. Hairston for his unfeigned commitment to the cross of Jesus Christ.

The selected theme this year, “If the Foundations be Destroyed, What Can the Righteous Do?” from Psalm 11:3, calls us to reflect on the importance of our spiritual foundations in an ever-changing nonconformist world.

As we gather in this vibrant city, rich in history and culture, we are reminded that our faith is built upon the solid rock of Christ. Atlanta, with its legacy of resilience and unity, serves as a backdrop of true inspiration as we explore the many

pressing challenges that are facing our churches today. Together, we will seek to reaffirm our commitment to the foundational truths of Scripture and the enduring principles of our faith.

This Lectureship promises to be a time of profound teaching, meaningful discussions, heartfelt fellowship, and collaboration. We are genuinely honored to welcome a distinguished lineup of speakers, renowned leaders and scholars from across the nation who will guide us in examining the foundations of our faith and the critical issues that threaten them. Their insights will not only deepen our understanding of God’s Word, but will also empower us to stand firm in our convictions.

As we engage in worship, dialogue, and fellowship, let us heed the call of Psalm 11:3 and work together to strengthen the foundations of our faith.

The challenges we face may appear to be daunting at times, but through unity and shared purpose, we can uphold the values that define us as a brotherhood community of believers.

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*Together, we will seek to reaffirm our commitment to the foundational truths of Scripture and the enduring principles of our faith.*

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In addition to our workshops and lectures, we earnestly encourage you to connect with one another. Share your experiences, insights, and prayers as we navigate these pivotal times together. Your presence and participation is unequivocally vital as we seek to equip ourselves for the work of the visible Kingdom.

Thank you for partnering with us in this important gathering and may the 2025 Lectureship inspire us to become steadfast, courageous, and righteous; ensuring that our foundation remains strong for future generations to come.



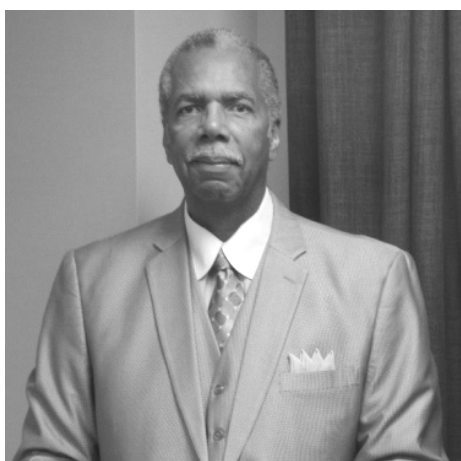
**Brother Marcus T. Watkins**  
Senior Minister  
Simpson Street Church of Christ

In Christ's love,

Marcus T. Watkins,  
Senior Ministering Evangelist  
Simpson Street Church of Christ

Marcus T. Watkins and his wife, Gloria, have been married for 36 plus years. They have two adult daughters and two grandchildren.

## Advisory Committee of the Churches of Christ “Historical” Annual National Lectureship Selects Dr. Lovell C. Hayes as New Advisory Committee Chairman



**D**r. Lovell C. Hayes serves as Ministering Evangelist to the East Jackson Church of Christ in Jackson, Tennessee, where he has labored since 1994.

Under his proficient ministry, the Church continues to seek to excel in ministry development, outreach, and internal Kingdom upbuilding for the cause of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Dr. Hayes attended Nashville Christian Institute in Nashville, Tennessee, and traveled with the celebrated and world renowned Evangelist Marshall Keeble. He is a graduate of Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas, having received an Associate of Arts degree in English; a Bachelor of Science degree in Bible from Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas; a Master of Science degree in Human Development Counseling from the University of Illinois at Springfield; and a Doctor of Ministry degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Southern Christian University located in Montgomery, Alabama.

Before beginning his tenure with the East Jackson Church of Christ, Lovell C. Hayes served Churches of Christ in the cities of Bakersfield, California, and also Springfield, Illinois.

Lovell C. Hayes has a tremendous amount of experience as a Nationally Board Certified and State Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). He is an adjunct faculty member of Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tennessee, where he teaches in the Counseling Department.

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*Dr. Hayes attended Nashville Christian Institute in Nashville, Tennessee, and traveled with the celebrated and world renowned Evangelist Marshall Keeble.*

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His community involvement includes service on the Board of Directors for the Jackson Transit Authority and on the Steering Committee of the Code Red Coalition. Furthermore, his leadership prowess and organizational effectiveness lends itself to having served on the Steering Committee of the Midwest Lectureship and currently serving on the Steering Committees for both the Tennessee State

Lectureship and the Southeastern Regional Lectureship.

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*Before beginning his tenure with the East Jackson Church of Christ, Lovell C. Hayes served Churches of Christ in the cities of Bakersfield, California, and also Springfield, Illinois.*

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Dr. Lovell C. Hayes and his wife, Patricia, have been married for 53 years. They have two adult children and two grandchildren.



**“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”**



## The “Emerging Church” Fallacy and Postmodernism Anathema to the New Testament Church and Inspired Word of God

In some instances people will employ certain terms with the intent to camouflage a hidden objective. For the uninformed and those who are devoid of genuine understanding, they will read and perhaps hear what has been “said” without adequately comprehending what is “meant.” Such is the case pertinent to the “emerging church” theory in religious history today.

The “emerging church” idiom may sound palatable for the naïve and unsuspecting, but this worldly hypothesis is a vile abomination to the inspired Word of God. Not only does it violate the principal ethos of Scripture, it actively attempts to precipitously celebrate secularism over faith and revealed truth.

As it pertains to the postmodern movement and postmodernism of today, there are basically two sides regarding this existential discipline and philosophical pedagogy. There is what some have aptly referred to as “hard postmodernism” and there is what others have labeled as being “soft postmodernism.”

The purpose of this manifesto will be to examine the definition of “postmodernism” and then provide extensive elaboration regarding “soft modernism.” Let it be clearly understood that to offer an in-depth description of “postmodernism” is virtually impossible. However, it is possible to identify its fundamental features and how New Testament Christians should properly respond to this enigmatic ideology.

One of the main characteristics of postmodernism is its commitment to relativism or pluralism when addressing questions of “biblical truth.” Postmodernism also reflects a belief in what is called “deconstruction.”

This is a critical method which virtually asserts that the identity and intentions of a biblical text author are irrelevant to its interpretation; followed by the insidious and fallacious observation that in any case, no precise or exact meaning can be found in it. In essence, all interpretations of Scripture are equally valid

or equally meaningless contingent upon the readers point of view.

It obviously appears as though postmodernists have assumed the position towards Christianity that no one can lay claim to the possession of “truth” because in their estimation, “truth” is only defined by how one person may view things; hence, each individual is entitled to their own perspective.

Furthermore, postmodernists advocate that all claims to “truth” are equally valid and there is no universal or privileged vantage point that allows anyone to decide what is right or what is wrong. Something can be “true for me” but not “true.” This philosophical concept was adopted by the Greek sophist Protagoras who upheld the existential philosophy that... “If it’s right for me, it’s right.”

It also appears that postmodernists tend to view Christianity as being accepted because it is “believed” to be true by “some,” not because it is necessarily true. It is in their purview that all belief systems should be regarded as equally plausible. In other words, the categorical imperative for postmodernists is: “Something is true if it is true for me.”

The soft postmodernists are different than hard postmodernists and we will refer to this group as “emergers.” In general they are suspicious of all “truth” claims. Their suspicion is not found in a denial concerning the “existence” of truth, but rather a denial of the ability to come to terms with a certainty “about” the truth.

They believe in the principle of objective truth, but deny that “absolute certainty” regarding objective truth exists or that we as New Testament Christians are privy to truth. To the “emergers” truth must constantly be held in constriction, understanding the inhibitions and reservations that accompany it.

Perhaps the single greatest concern relative to “emergers” is

their disposition towards doctrine and their notion about truth. For the “emergers” (similar to “Behind the Veil” an allegorical metaphor used by W. E. B. Dubois in his seminal classic “*Souls of Black Folk*”) they do not believe “truth” is unbiased logic which is adopted to express a condition that is either true or false.

The result is that for those who embrace what they refer to as the “emerging church” ideology and credo, denominational theological distinctions are either minimized or ignored. Why is this so? Because although there may be a definitive correct biblical answer, “who’s to say who’s right or who’s wrong?”

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*The “emerging church” idiom may sound palatable for the naïve and unsuspecting, but this worldly hypothesis is a vile abomination to the inspired Word of God.*

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The motto encapsulated by the “emerging church” constituency is: “Can’t we all just get along and love one another?” In fact, the “emerging church” academy rejects any standardized methodology for doing anything. This subsequently leads to a liberal theology where “truth” becomes relative negating the fact that the Bible contains/is absolute truth and biblical truth is both “absolute” and “discernable.”

Most people who subscribe to the “emerging church” movement advocate a hermeneutic called the “hermeneutics of humility” which proclaims truth cannot be known absolutely. However, if the inspired inerrant, infallible, Word of God is not allowed to define what truth actually is, then coming to obedient faith in Christ is inconsequential and insignificant.

Another distinctive area where the “emerging church” has become iconoclastic is its chronic focus on ecumenism. Ostensible unification among individuals from different religious denominational back-

grounds and nonconformity in the expression of corporate worship on the Lord’s Day are strong elements of the radical “emerging church.”

Ecumenism means that compromise is taking place and it results in the attenuating of Scripture in favor of not “offending” another religious denomination. Providing entertainment for religious audiences rather than equipping them with the Word of God is commonplace for “emerging church” adherents.

Because of these concerns, one needs to beware of the “emerging church,” its “veiled” ulterior motif and what is “really” being taught. Heed should be given to the words of Jesus when He said: “Watch out for false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves” (Matt. 7:15).

While seeking new avenues to address today’s changing culture is laudable and exquisite, appropriating methods which minimizes and makes concessions to the “truth” of the Scripture in any form or fashion is nothing more than facilitating false doctrine; causing others to be led away from the one true Church instead of to it. The predominant priority and goal of New Testament Christians is to “deconstruct” any “unfounded” doctrinal beliefs so that we can truly worship God in Spirit and in truth.

How should the New Testament Church of Christ respond to the “emerging church?” As with any existential postmodern philosophy, the “emerging church” should coerce us back to the Word of God.

If Scripture was sufficient and adequate enough during apostolic times in the agnostic society of the first century, then it is certainly competent for the New Testament Church in the postmodern times of this age (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). God’s people living in a nonconformist, extremist, avant-garde religious culture of today must be grounded in New Testament sound doctrine.

(Continued on page on page 9)



## “How Long Will You Halt Between Two Opinions?” A Testimonial of the National Lectureship Executive Chairman

The account of Elijah and the prophets of Baal is recorded in the book of I Kings chapter 18. After Israel had gone for more than three years without rain as a judgment for their sinful idolatry, the “Eagle Eye Prophet” Elijah confronts King Ahab and challenges him to a spiritual showdown.

The King was to have Israel gather at Mt. Carmel, along with the 450 prophets of the false god Baal in addition to the 400 prophets of the false goddess Asherah. On Mt. Carmel, Elijah said to the people of Israel, “How long will you halt between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, then follow him.”

The people remained non-committed at this point. As a result, Elijah issues a challenge to the false prophets of Baal to prepare a bull as an offering for their god; Elijah would do the same with this catch: they could light no fire on their altar. The God who answered with fire from the sky above would be considered as the one and only true God.

The people agreed that this was a good plan and the prophets of Baal went first. The false prophets cried out and danced around their altar from morning till noon with no answer from Baal. Elijah began to taunt them, saying... “Shout louder! Surely he is a god! Perhaps your god is deep in thought, or perhaps he is busy or traveling. Maybe he is just sleeping and must be awakened.”

The false prophets of Baal shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears as was their custom until their blood flowed. Midday passed and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. Despite hours of entertaining efforts, there was no response; nothing happened and no one answered.

Elijah then called the people to him as he repaired the altar of the Lord. He used twelve stones and dug a trench around the altar. He then placed wood on the altar and laid the cut pieces of the bull on it. Elijah then had the people douse the altar with twelve large jars of water. The water soaked the sacrifice and the wood and filled the trench. Once the sacrifice was

was ready, Elijah prayed, “Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are the God of Israel. I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”

Then God did what Baal could never do: the fire of the Lord fell from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and also licked up the water in the trench. Then the people of Israel bowed down and declared the Lord as God.

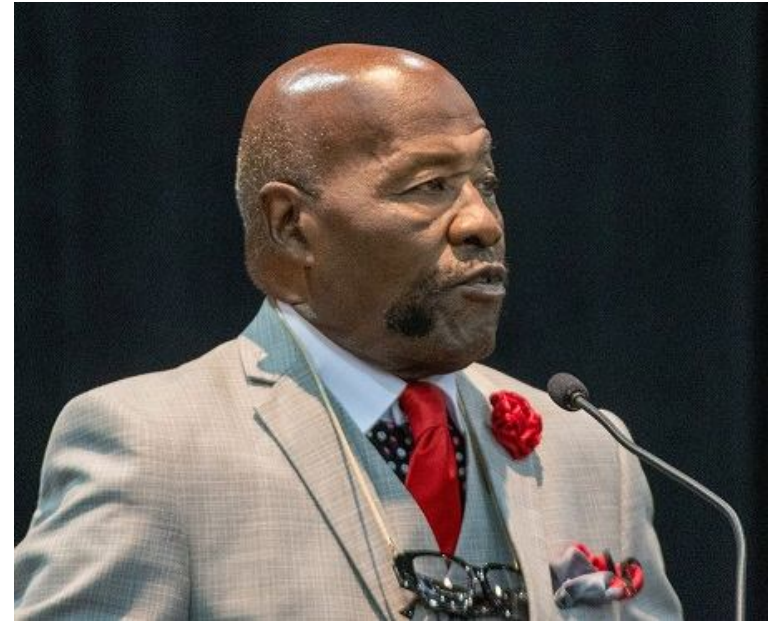
This is the point, even in the face of adversity and discouragement, Elijah remained faithful. Throughout the Bible, he is held up as an example of godliness and might. Not only is he mentioned later in the Old Testament, but also in all four gospels and two epistles. Furthermore, he appears at the transfiguration with Jesus, and when Jesus began His ministry, some even thought that He was Elijah who had returned to earth.

The Elijah narrative genuinely serves as comfort and encouragement to sound gospel preachers today who are committed to New Testament apostolic doctrine. Being a strong gospel preacher who will stand for biblical “truth” does not mean that we will never become discouraged in our preaching and teaching. It simply means that we will not succumb or surrender to the extremist philosophical views of postmodernism and relativism currently advocated by a few libertarians within our fellowship.

At the 75th National Lectureship which took place April 20-25, 2019, in St. Louis, Missouri, it was requested of me to openly state my position to the audience in regard to the sinful use of mechanical instruments of music in New Testament worship.

My position remains the same as it was in the past. The New Testament does not authorize or endorse the use of mechanical instruments of music in New Testament worship and to embrace such a liberal, postmodern, and radical view pertinent to New Testament worship is indeed sinful.

The New Testament clearly teaches us in Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, along



**W. F. Washington, Ph.D., Executive Committee Chairman  
Ministers' Institute Founder**

with Hebrews 2:12; and Hebrews 13:15, how we as Christians should “make music” in New Testament worship. In matters germane to the “Historical” Annual National Lectureship and Ministers’ Institute, our affirmative position has not changed.

As William Lloyd Garrison the abolitionist and editor of *The Liberator* newspaper once aptly declared regarding his stance against chattel slavery: “I am in earnest, I will not excuse, I will not equivocate, I will not retreat a single inch...”

Those selected to participate on the National Lectureship program and W. F. Washington Theological Institute, must of necessity “speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1 – NKJV).

My testament ascertains with unequivocal conviction and unabridged certainty that New Testament Christian worship stems from complete obedience to God’s Word, God’s will, and God’s way. New Testament Christian worship is for the purpose of giving “glory to God in the Church” and not to ourselves.

Our purposeful objective in worship is to “edify” one another, “enlighten” one another, “extol” one another, and “esteem” one another. There is no passage of Scripture in the New Testament which tells us to “entertain” one another. Notwithstanding, the apostolic principles pertinent to New Testament worship cannot be replaced with unbiblical or anti-biblical “false fellowship.”

One of the things outstandingly condemned in the Bible is division. Yet, there are those who claim to be preachers of God and “conveyors of the New Covenant” but in reality they are emissaries of Satan and narcissistic lovers of themselves.

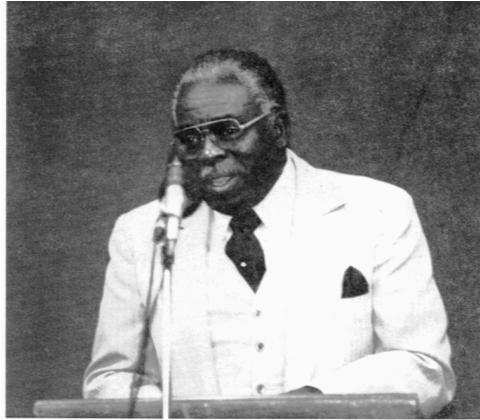
Therefore, my heart’s desire and prayer to God is that in the days, months, years, and decades to follow, gospel preachers who are “sound in the faith” will take a stand like Elijah and confront anyone who dares to oppose what the Bible teaches.

**W. F. W.**



## “Gold Coast Restoration Forum” Results in African American Churches of Christ Withdrawing from Ivory James, Jr.

**Another “Restoration Forum” is Needed Today for Addressing the Purveyors and Perpetrators of False Doctrine in the New Testament Church of Christ**



Minister David Shanks of Miami, Florida, vociferously stated, “I believe the Church of Christ consists of ‘Christians only’ and the ‘only Christians.’” Shanks denied that the [New Testament] Church rests on Campbell and Stone, saying, “I never have been a member of a Church of the Restoration Movement.”



Waxing eloquent as is his wont, Dr. W. F. Washington of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, delivered the closing address on the first day, declaring that a New Testament example is still binding on Christians today. There is no such religious practice in the Bible which supports denominationalism. “Jesus Christ has ‘one’ Church and it is the Church of Christ.”



As for drawing lines of fellowship with false teachers, Dr. R. C. Wells of Harlem, New York City, fearlessly pointed out beyond any reservation that “the Bible draws the line” and that he was “scared of folks who are afraid to draw the line.”



Minister Robert V. Simmons of St. Petersburg, Florida, the elder statesman of Gospel preachers who were present at the Forum, he also rebuked the heretical positions embraced by Ivory James, Jr.



Dr. Jack Evans, Sr., then-President of Southwestern Christian College, recommended the following week by letter to Dr. W. F. Washington, Dr. Eugene Lawton, Dr. R. C. Wells, Minister David Shanks, Minister Nokomis Yeldell, Brother Ira Rice, Brother Andre Miller; a member of the “S” Avenue Church of Christ in Riviera Beach, Florida, and Minister Robert V. Simmons, the immediate withdrawal of Ivory James, Jr., due to his false teaching and refusal to repent.



Regarding the subject of music, Dr. Eugene Lawton of Newark, New Jersey, described the Bible as “not silent.” Referring to Ephesians 5:19, Lawton said that “singing knocks out plucking; singing knocks out blowing.” Lawton also cited Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; Hebrews 13:15, and other passages.

### Stating the Case:

On April 29 and 30, 1986, the Gold Coast Restoration Forum occurred in the city of Miami, Florida, to discuss the heretical teaching of Brother Ivory James, Jr., who at the time served as

Minister of the “S” Avenue Church of Christ in Riviera Beach, Florida. As lead-off speaker for the April 30th afternoon session, Dr. R. C. Wells, Minister of the Harlem Church of Christ in New York City, Wells denied that the Apostle Paul

preached “the gospel” to those who were non-Christians only, citing Romans 1:7ff. Dr. Wells described the Restoration Movement reformers as reacting to the religious life of their day. As it pertained to matters



## *Previous Annual National Lectureship Cities*

1945 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
 1946 Houston, Texas  
 1947 Los Angeles, California  
 1948 Chicago, Illinois  
 1949 Philadelphia Pennsylvania  
 1950 Cleveland, Ohio  
 1951 Detroit, Michigan  
 1952 Indianapolis, Indiana  
 1953 Wichita, Kansas  
 1954 New York City, New York  
 1955 Birmingham, Alabama  
 1956 Los Angeles, California  
 1957 Houston, Texas  
 1958 Chicago, Illinois  
 1959 Memphis, Tennessee  
 1960 San Francisco, California  
 1961 Detroit, Michigan  
 1962 Denver, Colorado  
 1963 Dallas, Texas  
 1964 Toledo, Ohio  
 1965 Kansas City, Missouri  
 1966 Indianapolis, Indiana  
 1967 Newark, New Jersey  
 1968 Fort Lauderdale, Florida  
 1969 Houston, Texas  
 1970 Augusta, Georgia  
 1971 Cleveland, Ohio  
 1972 Portland, Oregon  
 1973 San Antonio, Texas  
 1974 Louisville, Kentucky  
 1975 Saint Louis, Missouri  
 1976 Tulsa, Oklahoma  
 1977 Chattanooga, Tennessee  
 1978 New York City, New York  
 1979 Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
 1980 Muncie, Indiana  
 1981 Dallas, Texas  
 1982 Los Angeles, California  
 1983 Memphis, Tennessee  
 1984 Fort Lauderdale, Florida

1985 Chicago, Illinois  
 1986 Jackson, Mississippi  
 1987 Little Rock, Arkansas  
 1988 Saint Louis, Missouri  
 1989 Cleveland, Ohio  
 1990 Houston, Texas  
 1991 Denver, Colorado  
 1992 Winston-Salem, North Carolina  
 1993 Augusta, Georgia  
 1994 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
 1995 New York City, New York  
 1996 San Antonio, Texas  
 1997 Sacramento, California  
 1998 Baltimore, Maryland  
 1999 Kansas City, Missouri  
 2000 Dallas, Texas  
 2001 Miami, Florida  
 2002 Los Angeles, California  
 2003 Detroit, Michigan  
 2004 Seattle, Washington  
 2005 Nashville, Tennessee  
 2006 Chicago, Illinois  
 2007 Cincinnati, Ohio  
 2008 Birmingham, Alabama  
 2009 Jackson, Mississippi  
 2010 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
 2011 New York City, New York  
 2012 Louisville, Kentucky  
 2013 Houston, Texas  
 2014 Atlanta, Georgia  
 2015 Chicago, Illinois  
 2016 Memphis, Tennessee  
 2017 Atlanta, Georgia  
 2018 Greensboro, North Carolina  
 2019 Saint Louis, Missouri  
 2020 Cancelled – COVID-19  
 2021 Cancelled – COVID-19  
 2022 Orlando, Florida  
 2023 Houston, Texas  
 2024 Montgomery, Alabama  
 2025 Atlanta, Georgia



# African American Churches of Christ "Historical" National Lectureship Serving the Brotherhood Since 1945

*"Preserving Our Past and Protecting Our Future"*

**"1945"**

*"If the Church is challenged for a debate,  
call Hogan to debate the cause."*

*"If you need extra help on understanding a  
passage of Scripture, call Steward."*



G. P. Bowser  
1874 - 1950

**"2025"**

*"If you need help in administrative areas  
of your Church work, call Winston."*

*"When your spirits get low and you feel  
down and out, call Kennedy and he will  
cheer you up."*



R. N. Hogan  
1902-1997



J. S. Winston  
1906-2001



Levi Kennedy, Jr.  
1899-1970



G. E. Steward  
1906-1979

Above you will find the final instructions given by Brother G. P. Bowser before his death to Hogan, Winston, Kennedy, and Steward. Although each of the founding pioneers pictured above have been called to rest, the National Lectureship continues to serve as a vital link for our great brotherhood. The vision has not varied and the objective is to preach sound doctrine. In addition, there is only ONE "Historical" National Lectureship that is "validated" among a consensus of African American Churches of Christ. Therefore, "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not" (Galatians. 6:9).



**"One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism"**



(The “emerging church” - Con’t from page 4)

Further references appertaining to the “emerging church” and “postmodern fallacy” is that many who espouse this abhorrent rationale have decided there is value and even virtue in being uncertain about the Scripture. The bottom line is they have cultivated the “pseudo myth” that we are not even supposed to comprehend precisely what the Bible ethicizes. For the “emerging church” partisans, it is unconscionable for us to think that we can know what the Bible actually teaches. This absurdity alone is a “frontal attack” on the clarity of Scripture.

The “emerging church” epistemology which is a sycophant of postmodernism contends it is arrogant to believe that one “knows” truth. Instead, truth is that which is only determined subjectively, being fashioned by culture and not by Scripture.

For example, it is argued by disciples of the “emerging church” that we cannot declare as truth that those who differ with our institutional interpretation of teaching Scripture and worship are wrong. In the estimation of “emerging churches” all teaching is now declared to be “relative” and a mere matter of “subjectivism.”

The “emerging church” as it has been stated by one individual “...desires to coexist through the gospel, inviting all who have submitted to Christ in harmony with apostolic teaching, enabling fellowship that celebrates God’s kingdom in its full, multifaceted embodiment.... “The emerging church proceeds with a reimagined course, seeking a Christianity as old as it is new, grounded as it is open... “It is the church that holds the line while knowing it does not create the lines. The emerging church is about that shift.”

The “emerging church” denies any “absolute truth” because it [EC] allows for many possibilities of scriptural interpretations. The “emerging church” believes there is no absolute and normative interpretation of the Bible, but rather a personal interpretation. However, the New Testament Church of Christ “emerged” in the city of Jerusalem in approximately 33 CE on the first Pentecost following the bodily resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

There has been and there will be no “shift” in apostolic doctrine regarding what one must do in order to experience justification, the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, and biblical fellowship.

The “trajectory” of “emerging church” language suggesting a false dichotomy between pursuing biblically sound doctrine and loving people is perhaps best seen in their “posture” towards other religions.<sup>1</sup> They believe modern evangelicals need to move away from defining themselves with a denominational label and embrace the faith traditions of other religions instead of asserting another person’s belief or practice (whether true or untrue) is unbiblical and false.

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*The “emerging church” epistemology which is a sycophant of postmodernism, contends it is arrogant to believe that one knows truth. Instead, truth is that which is only determined subjectively, being fashioned by culture and not by Scripture.*

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The “emerging church” upholds the conception that “we must reject the modern tradition of establishing moral absolutes, especially on controversial issues and accept everyone as beloved children of God.”<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding, the “emerging church” believes our culture has fundamentally changed from a modern age to a postmodern age and unless the Church changes accordingly, our current understanding and articulation of the gospel will soon be irrelevant. Our culture is emerging and the Church needs to emerge with it.<sup>3</sup>

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*The “emerging church” obviously denies “absolute truth” because it allows for many possibilities of scriptural interpretations. The “emerging church” believes there is no absolute and normative interpretation of the Bible, but rather a personal interpretation.*

---

A few characteristics and common traits adhered to by “emerging churches” include but are not limited to the following:

- An inclusive approach to various and sometimes contradictory belief systems.<sup>4</sup>
- An emphasis on experience and feelings over absolutes.
- An emphasis on ecumenical and interfaith collaboration which they define as being “fellowship.”
- A de-emphasis on doctrinal absolutes.
- A re-evaluation of time-honored and historically accepted doctrines.

- A re-evaluation of the place of Christianity in the world.
- A re-evaluation of the place of the New Testament Church in today’s society.
- A re-examination of fundamental Bible teachings.

There is no official single “emerging church” doctrine, so there is no unified structure to examine. However, there are many “emerging church” articles which frequently employ the terms “reimagining,” “reimagined,” “reimagine,” and “shift.”

Just from carefully reading about this movement, it is conspicuously apparent that the “emerging church” as a whole is off-center and is sacrificing time-honored biblical truths for a “let’s-just-get-along” posture and proclivity construct.

Some “emerging churches” foster an inclusivistic premise; which means those outside of New Testament Christianity will be saved, while others are not.

The “emerging church” is disillusioned with institutionalism and sees the Church itself as an obstacle to faith.<sup>5</sup>

From all indications, the “emerging church” ideology has abandoned the essentials of the Christian faith and in spite of its so-called proclamation to “reimagine” or “reimage” Christianity afresh, it is a dissident nonconformist proposition which opposes the sacred Scripture in numerous ways.

From the standpoint of rudimentary realism, the “emerging church” with its untenable and illusory ideology which champions the doctrine of subjectivism, it literally has no “lines to uphold.”

Let it be known that these are trying times for the New Testament Church of Christ, but it is not a time for despair. Instead, courageous men and women must keep the old ship of Zion on a straight course within the boundaries of divine truth. “Truth crushed to the earth shall rise again.” Truth will prevail in spite of the winds of “emerging” postmodern change. Thomas Carlyle, the 19th century Scottish essayist and historian said it best: “No lie can live forever!” (Σ)

<sup>1</sup>Gibbs, E. & Bolger, R. K. *Emerging Churches*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>Inclusivism is the error that people can be saved without specific knowledge of Jesus Christ and that their general faith in the concept of God and sincerity of heart is sufficient enough to warrant forgiveness.

<sup>5</sup>Pagitt, D. & Jones, T. *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.



("Restoration Forum" - Con't from page 6)

in reference to Barton W. Stone, Wells described him as a man who had "serious problems with his confession of faith" not even considering the subject of baptism until 1825, and beginning a "unity" movement in 1804 before he was even a Christian himself.

Wells articulated: "I don't hang my star with Stone, Thomas or Alexander Campbell, or any other non-Christian who starts a movement." Wells also declared: "I hang my star with Peter, James, John, and inspired men in the Bible." In addition, Wells denied any loyalty to slogans.

David Shanks, Minister of the Overton/Miami Church of Christ in Miami, Florida, vociferously stated, "God did not leave us in the dark." Shanks denied that the [New Testament] Church rests means on Campbell and Stone, saying, "I never have been a member of a 'Church of the Restoration Movement.'"

As for drawing lines of fellowship, Wells pointed out that "the Bible draws the line" and that he was "scared of folks who are afraid to draw the line." He showed how the "us" and the "them" in 1 Peter 4:17 draws the line: "...if it begin first at US, what shall be the end of THEM..." Referring to 1 Corinthians 2, Wells showed that our faith "should not stand in the wisdom of man." Also, that in other passages the Bible explicitly says that we are to withdraw from a brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us [meaning apostolic doctrine].

As it pertains to the subject of music, Dr. Eugene Lawton, Minister of the Newark Church of Christ in Newark, New Jersey, described the Bible as "not silent." Referring to Ephesians 5: 19, he said that "singing knocks out plucking; singing knocks out blowing." Lawton also cited Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; Hebrews 13:15, and other texts.

Based upon the false doctrine perpetuated by Ivory James, Jr., the individual for whom this Forum meeting was called, Dr. Jack Evans, Sr., along with Dr. James Maxwell, composed a letter dated May 5, 1986, recommending the withdrawal of Ivory James, Jr., due to his erroneous teaching and refusal to repent. This letter of withdrawal was

sent to Dr. W. F. Washington, Dr. Eugene Lawton, Dr. R. C. Wells, Brother Ira Rice, Minister David Shanks, Minister Nokomis Yeldell, Brother Andre Miller; a member of the "S" Avenue Church of Christ in Riviera Beach, Florida, where Ivory James, Jr., served as the preacher, and Minister Robert V. Simmons.

Dear brethren:

As you remember, the last action of our Restoration Forum in Miami, on the night of April 30th... In a three-way telephone conference with brother James on Friday morning, May 1, brother James informed Dr. Maxwell and me arrogantly... stating that he welcomes the withdrawal of fellowship, being "free at last..." Brother James further substantiated the basis of our withdrawal from him as a false teacher by confirming in our telephone conversation the following:

1. That the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship is not a test of fellowship.
2. That one does not have to understand that baptism is for the remission of sins when he is baptized.
3. That all of the saved are not identified in one group on earth (the Church of Christ), but are scattered throughout various denominations, with all of them being in fellowship with Christ, including, possibly, even Billy Graham.

Because of the above, we recommend that our decision to delay brother James' withdrawal of fellowship for sixty days be rescinded, and that the withdrawal be immediately imposed and announced to our brotherhood. To delay it further, we believe, would just give brother James more unrestrained time to disseminate his false views and subvert the souls of many innocent people.

*Signed Jack Evans   Signed James Maxwell*

To all Ministers, Elders, and Saints of God Everywhere:

This is to inform you of the disciplinary action that has been taken against Brother Ivory James, Jr., and all the members of the "S" Avenue Church of Christ located at 2120 "S" Avenue, Riviera Beach, Florida, who share and support him in his false teachings. Brother Ivory James is teaching, "The Church of Christ contains within its membership, Christians only, but not the only Christians." Simply stated:

1. That there are loyal Christians in churches, other than Churches of Christ.
2. That we cannot baptize anyone for the remission of sins.
3. That one is saved at the point of faith and baptism is an outward sign of inward grace.
4. The use of mechanical instruments of music in New Testament Church worship should not be made a test of fellowship.

I, David Shanks, met with Bro. James on three occasions and on two of these times was accompanied by others in efforts to help him to reconcile his teaching with the Word of God, but to no avail. Brother James agreed to meet with a number of well-trained Evangelists, and me, men of his choosing as well as mine. The men who responded were Dr. R. C. Wells, Brother Nokomis Yeldell, Dr. Eugene Lawton, Brother Leroy Garrett, Dr. W. F. Washington, Dr. Jack Evans, Dr. James Maxwell, and Dr. James Dennis.

We met in a two day forum in Miami, Florida, April 29-30. All the Ministers that he and I invited pointed out his false teaching and condemned it, except Brother Leroy Garrett. Brother James would not renounce his false teaching... This action is supported by the following Ministers: Brother Nokomis Yeldell, Dr. Eugene Lawton, Dr. R. C. Wells, Dr. W. F. Washington, Dr. Jack Evans, and Dr. James Maxwell. Brother Ivory James, Jr., has been withdrawn from and all those members who remain loyal to and support him in teaching doctrine contrary to New Testament teaching.

Be it further resolved, inasmuch as Brother Leroy Garrett of Denton, Texas, is supporting Brother James by teaching and encouraging the same doctrine, we here and now withdraw from him also. The Bible teaches us to withdraw from every brother who walketh disorderly (II Thess. 3:6). Let us pray that these brothers will repent and turn back to God in their teaching. When either or both of these brothers repent, and notify the leaders of this Church [Miami/Overton Church of Christ] you will be notified immediately, and this writing retracted.

Yours truly,

David Shanks, Moses Williams, Mannie Black.

Below you will find a copy of the letter sent by Dr. Jack Evans, Sr., and Dr. James Maxwell to the Ministers who were previously mentioned in this article. Also, you will find a response letter submitted by the Overtown/Miami Church of Christ elders and Minister David Shanks who requested this Forum meeting to Dr. Jack Evans.



(Restoration Forum” - Con’t from page 10)

### “Beyond the Thicket” – “Before the Thicket”

Virtually two years before the Restoration Forum regarding the withdrawal of Ivory James, Jr., Dr. Jack Evans, Sr., then-president of Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas, met Floyd Rose on the date of March 19, 1984, in a second debate in Toledo, Ohio.

The first encounter was held earlier in Texas. Rose once served as a Minister in the Church of Christ for more than thirty (30) years. Similar to the situation involving Ivory James, Jr., and the “S” Avenue Church of Christ in Riviera Beach, Florida, the Ridgewood Church of Christ in Toledo, Ohio, where Rose was the preacher, withdrew from him for teaching false doctrine as well.

Earlier in 1984, Floyd Rose authored a book entitled “*Beyond the Thicket*” explaining his rationale for leaving the Church of Christ. In response to the publication of Rose, Dr. Evans authored a book entitled “*Before the Thicket*” to refute the erroneous doctrine advocated in Floyd’s book. Three facts were openly admitted to by Floyd Rose:

1. He founded Family Baptist Church and it was a denomination.
2. He believes that there are Christians in all denominations.
3. All are saved whether or not they understand and obey the correct design of baptism.

Dr. Evans pointed out the erroneous false doctrine advocated by Floyd Rose. Dr. Evans said, “Floyd Rose sought to substantiate his position that the Church of Christ began in 1906 by presenting some old history book where it was recorded that the Church of Christ and Christian Church were the same bodies.”

Dr. Evans further stated that Rose was using the wrong history book and called his attention to the fact that the New Testament Church of Christ began in AD 33 (Acts 2:47). Dr. Evans also mentioned that Floyd Rose was not a gospel minister, but a “heretic” and a “false teacher.” Dr. Evans admonished the audience not to follow Rose’s false doctrine.

Members of the Church of Christ who were in attendance applauded and praised Dr. Evans for the excellent job he did in defending “the faith once

delivered” while responding to Rose with Scripture. Dr. Evans continued to assert that:

1. Our faith must not rely upon man, but in God’s Word (Rom. 3:4).
2. Christians need to always be on guard and examine what is taught according to God’s Word (1 Thess. 5:21; Eph. 5:10).

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*As for drawing lines of fellowship, Wells pointed out that “the Bible draws the line” and that he was “scared of folks who are afraid to draw the line.”*

---

In both case scenarios which involved the erroneous beliefs of Ivory James, Jr., along with Floyd Rose, several similarities are realized. They both advocate and maintain that:

5. There are loyal Christians in churches other than the Church of Christ; hence, there are Christians in all denominations.
6. We [the Church of Christ] cannot baptize anyone for the remission of sins. All are saved even if they do not comprehend and obey the correct purpose of baptism.
7. Mechanical instruments of music are not a violation of New Testament doctrine as it relates to New Testament worship.

#### **Obtaining and Maintaining Fellowship:**

A brief mention and definition of New Testament fellowship, how spiritual fellowship is to be both obtained and maintained with other New Testament Christians will be made at this juncture.

Our English word “fellowship” found in the noun and verb forms of the New Testament is translated from the Greek word *koinonia*. It has to do with sharing things in common, joint participation, partnership, and like ideas. The basis of fellowship among New Testament Christians is their common fellowship with Deity: “...and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ... “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not [tell] the truth...” (1 John 1:3; 6).

It is only when two or more people have established fellowship with God and His Son can they thereby be in fellowship with each other. On the first Pentecost following the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus [approximately CE 33] some three thousand people responded to the gospel preaching of Peter in this very way (Acts 2:41), and they are immediately described as being and continuing in fellowship with each other (v. 42). By this process only do men enter into fellowship with God and thereby with one another.

However, “continuing” and “remaining” in fellowship with God and with other Christians is dependent upon one’s “walking in the light,” a metaphor meaning faithful obedience. Again, reference is made to 1 John 1:7 where it reads: “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another...”

Only as two or more people continue to live lives that are obedient to God, thereby enjoying His fellowship, do these persons continue to “have fellowship one with another.”

Obviously, from the standpoint of both deductive and inductive reasoning, It is quite possible for one to lose fellowship with God (and thus one’s fellowship with all others who are in fellowship with God), or else John’s statement is meaningless.

#### **Fellowship can be Forfeited and Withdrawn:**

In light of the foregoing, particularly the statement from 1 John 1:6, 7, one should not be surprised that the New Testament has much to say about the “forfeiture of fellowship.” The warnings of apostasy and those who perpetuate false doctrine are many and frequent. Likewise, instructions which deal with impenitent, sinful brethren are plain and profuse.

The requirement to withdraw fellowship from brethren who walk in darkness and continuously violate New Testament doctrine, is principally based upon the fact that such ones have already forfeited their fellowship with God. The choice is ours to make. If we would remain in fellowship with God the Father and the Lord Jesus, we cannot remain in fellowship with such brethren.

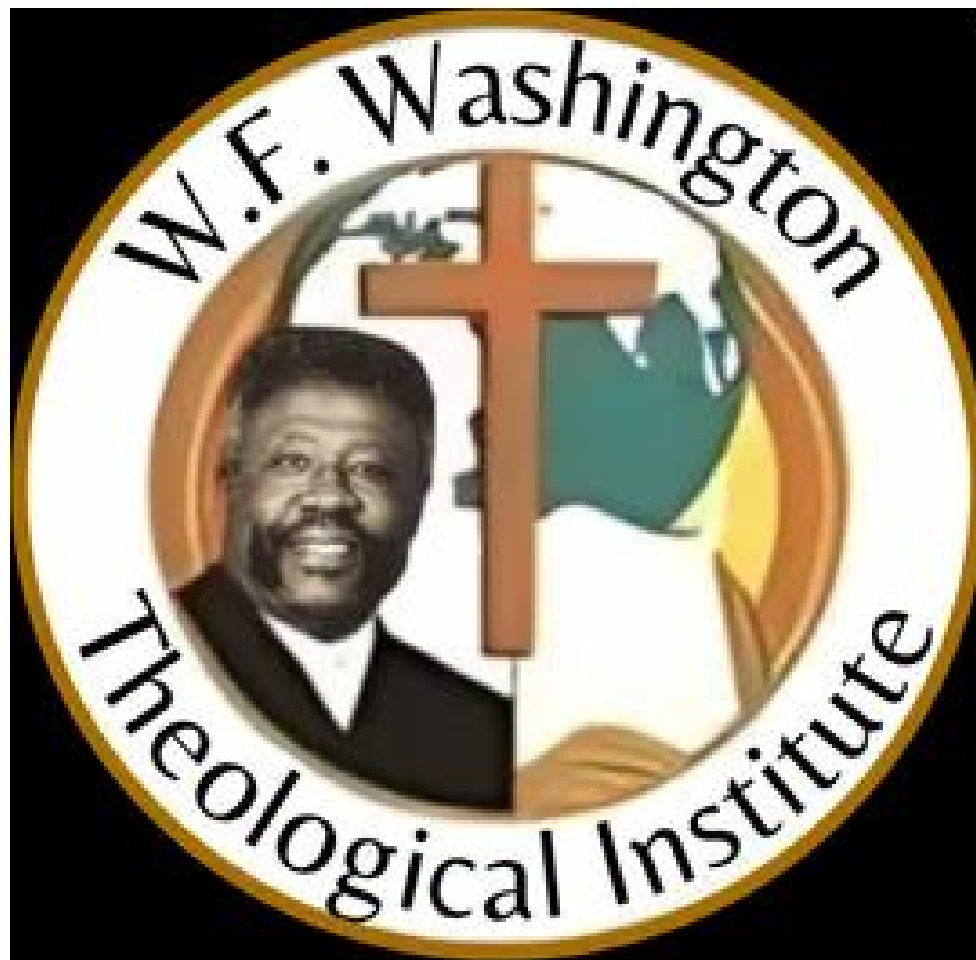
Paul penned a very potent, powerful, and plain statement to the Roman Christians on this subject: “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent” (Rom. 16:17, 18). Sounds like today doesn’t it?

Paul’s mandate to the Thessalonians is also explicit: “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us.... “And if any man obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note that man, that ye have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed. And yet count him not as an enemy but admonish him as a brother” (2 Thess. 3:6; 14, 15).

This teaching is so clear that no reasonably intelligent person can fail to grasp it. No excuse  
(Continued on page 18)



*W. F. Washington Theological Institute*  
*“Ministers’ Institute, USA”*



*“Old Error in New Robes”*

Whereas the Churches of Christ “Historical” National Lectureship and Southwestern Christian College (SwCC) Lectureship are the two oldest and most distinguished annual events held among African American Churches of Christ, the “W. F. Washington Theological Institute” is the most celebrated “Ministerial Convocation” among African American Churches of Christ in our brotherhood. The “WFWTI” which occurred during the dates of January 19-22, 2025, in South Florida was indeed a tremendous success accentuating the selected theme “*Old Error in New Robes*” derived from John 7:16; John 16:13; and Acts 20:30, 31. The Institute placed a concerted emphasis on the essentialness of New Testament Christians and the New Testament Church of Christ holding fast to apostolic doctrine along with biblical faith traditions which are revealed in New Testament Scripture. Dr. Harvey M. Jackson (National Coordinator) and Dr. Steven N. Thompson (Co-Coordinator) are commended for their efforts.

**“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”**



“And How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?”



“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

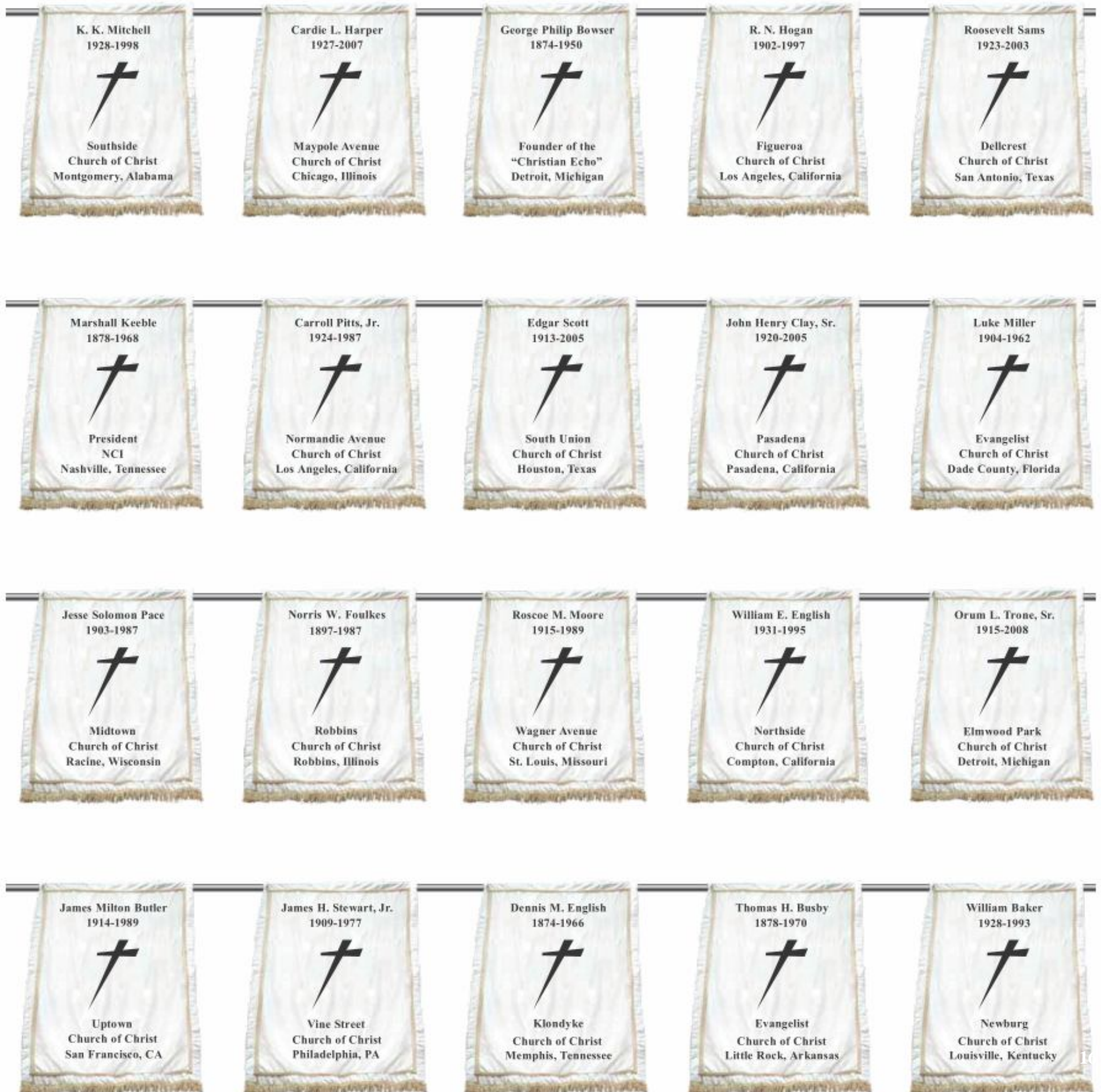


“And How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?”



“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

## “And How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?”



“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”



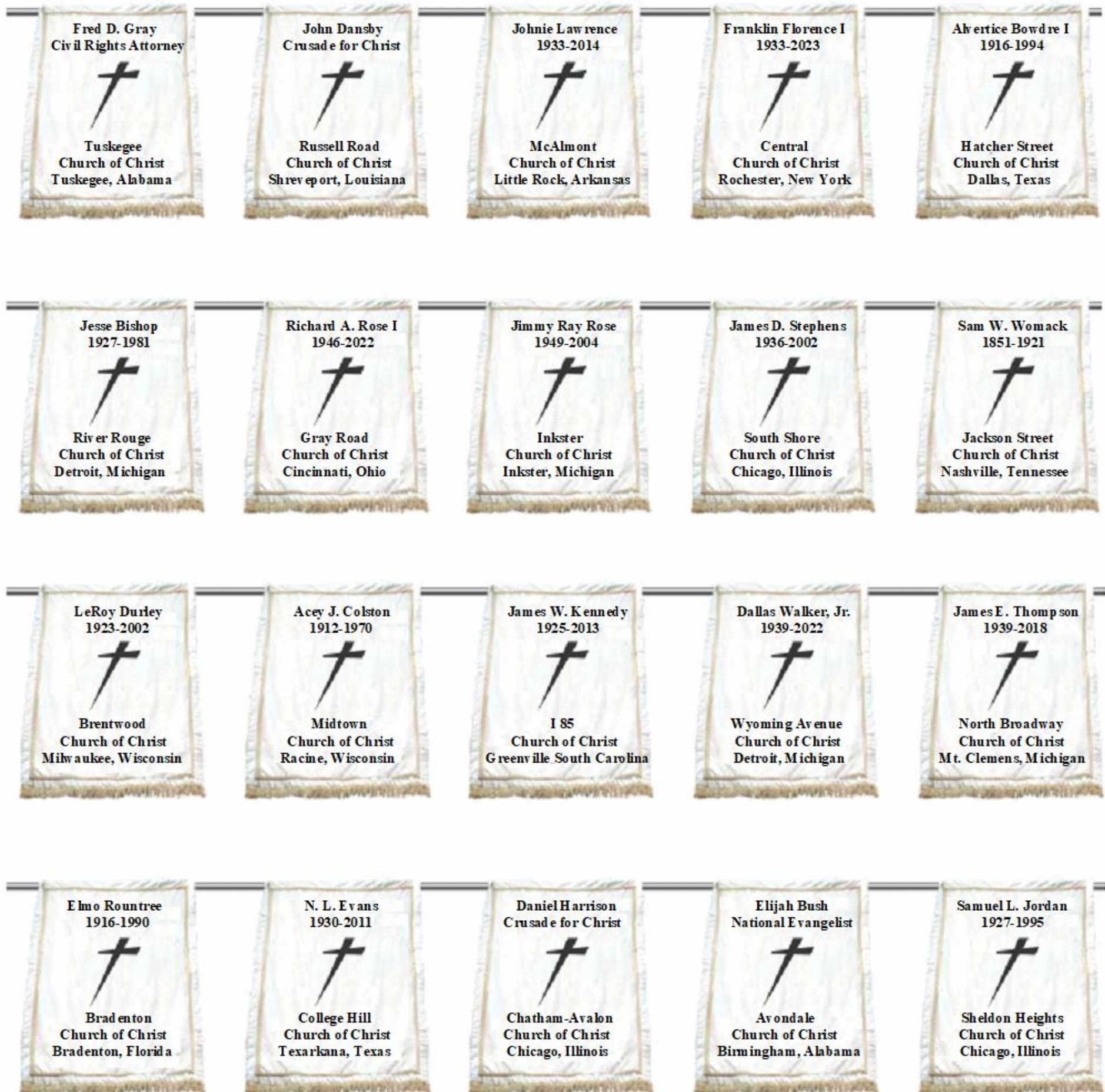
“And How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?”



“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”



## “And How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?”



“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”



("Fellowship" - Con't from page 11)

warrants our neglect of this exigent when circumstances demand it.

**Conclusion:**

It is not only a scriptural right, but a duty, to withdraw ourselves from false teaching brethren who transgress and infringe upon New Testament doctrine (when apostasy justifies it).

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*Most people who subscribe to the "emerging church" movement advocate a hermeneutic called the "hermeneutics of humility" which proclaims truth cannot be known absolutely.*

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When anyone adamantly refuses to accept the teaching of New Testament Scripture with an arrogant posture of "that's only your interpretation based upon cultural tradition..." this itself legislates where God has not done so.

---

*However, "continuing" and "remaining" in fellowship with God and with other Christians is dependent upon one's "walking in the light," a metaphor meaning faithful obedience.*

---

When a preacher (or preachers) take the position that they "know more than everyone else" due to their "narcissistic arrogance" and attempt to inculcate an "emerging church" philosophy erected upon a substructure of postmodernism, the existential ideology of relativism and pluralism, endeavoring to marshal God's people "away" from inerrant biblical truth, it therefore becomes essential for God's faithful men to "mark" them and "withdraw" from them.

**Summation:**

The New Testament Church of our Lord is the only "divinely authorized" institution on earth to "make known the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10). Since the New Testament Church of Christ has been given this obligatory edict, and because the destiny of men's precious souls are at stake, there ought to be unrestricted consequences for those who refuse to follow God's Word and maintain fellowship in the doctrine of the one true Church. (Σ)

## Minister and Leadership of the Southside Church of Christ in Rogersville, Alabama, Withdraws from Jerome Malone and the so-called "Oasis: Christ's Church" in Athens, Alabama



John Malone, Sr. (Senior Minister)

Porter Watkins, Jr. (Minister)

February 15, 2025

### To the Churches of Christ Brotherhood At-Large

This letter is to inform you of the status of our dear brother, Jerome Malone Sr., and those of the Oasis church which he has established of his own accord. As of May/ 2019, those mentioned above were disfellowshipped by the Southside church of Christ under the ministerial leadership of John Malone Sr. and the late Freeman Malone Jr. for reasons of error detailed in the original letter of withdrawal (attached).

It is of great regret that, as of now, there has been no reinstatement of fellowship, and the event of withdrawal is still in effect. Since the time of withdrawal, these have been engaged in denominational fellowship, as well as, Sister Tiffany Malone speaking and teaching publicly before an audience of men and women at Harpeth Hill Church of Christ in Nashville TN which can be viewed via facebook.

We take no pleasure in writing you this letter concerning the actions of our erred brothers and sisters for we love them dearly. It is because of our love for them, our love for the brotherhood, and our prayerful desire that return back to the fold of God in the right hand of fellowship that we write unto you.

**Romans 16:17** *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*

We hope you will help us win our brothers and sisters back to Christ by honoring this biblical admonishment. May God bless and keep you.

Yours In Christ,

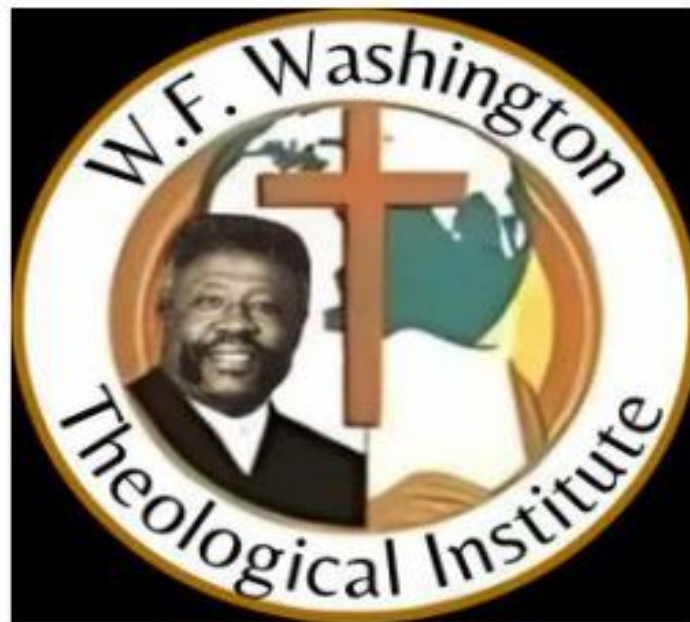
*John Malone Sr.*

John Malone Sr. (Senior Minister)

**NOTE:** As of February 15, 2025, this updated second withdrawal letter against Jerome Malone and the so-called "Oasis: Christ's Church" is still binding and in effect. The reason for the withdrawal is so stated in paragraph 2 of this letter. The initial letter dated May 23, 2019, pointed out the erroneous doctrinal teaching advocated by Jerome Malone that there are "Christians in a multiplicity of churches as long as they teach that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and baptism for remission of sins regardless of name and doctrine." As you can see, Tiffany Malone (wife of Jerome Malone) is a member of the so-called "Oasis: Christ's Church" and was found to be "speaking and teaching publicly before an audience of men and women at the Harpeth Hill Church of Christ in Nashville, Tennessee." As a result, we ask you to continue in prayer for them in reference to their actions.



**"One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism"**



To All Persons to Whom These Presents May Come Greeting.

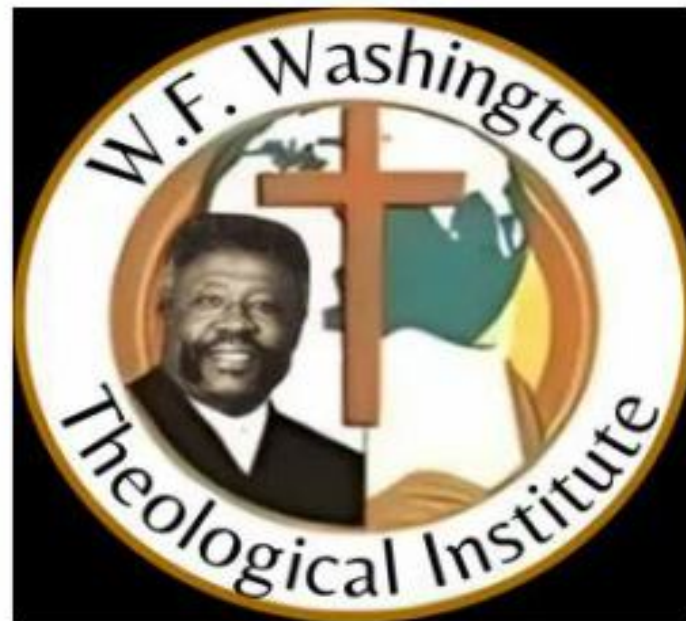
The "W. F. Washington Theological Institute" of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA does hereby extend words of consolation and comfort to the family of

*The Late Dr. James O'Leary Maxwell*  
*Vice-President Emeritus of Southwestern Christian College*  
*Terrell, Texas*

For the consecrated commitment given with respect  
to the defense of the gospel and furtherance of Christian Education  
January 30, 2025

Dr. Harvey M. Jackson, National Director  
Dr. Steven N. Thompson, Co-Coordinator

*W. F. Washington, Ph.D. - Institute Founder/President*



To All Persons to Whom These Presents May Come Greeting.

The "W. F. Washington Theological Institute" of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA does hereby extend words of consolation and comfort to the family of

*The Late Honorable Andrew Jasper Hairston, Esq.,  
Minister Emeritus of the Simpson Street Church of Christ  
Atlanta, Georgia*

For the consecrated commitment given with respect  
to the proclamation of the gospel and social justice  
January 31, 2025

Dr. Harvey M. Jackson, National Director  
Dr. Steven N. Thompson, Co-Coordinator

*W. F. Washington, Ph.D. - Institute Founder/President*

**Churches of Christ National Lectureship Executive Committee**  
**W. F. Washington, Ph.D., Chairman**  
**P. O. Box 5488**  
**Fort Lauderdale, FL 33310**  
**(954) 735-2907 • (954) 733-3385**



January 30, 2025

**re: Dr. James O. Maxwell and Family**

The Executive Committee of the Churches of Christ "Historical" National Lectureship extends to the family of the late Dr. James O. Maxwell its words of consolation and comfort in reference to the passing of our esteemed comrade in the faith.

Please know that our heartfelt and sincere condolences are extended to you at this most sensitive time. It has been said that "Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, but love leaves a memory no one can steal. Although it is difficult today to see beyond the sorrow, may your looking back in memory bring you solace on tomorrow."

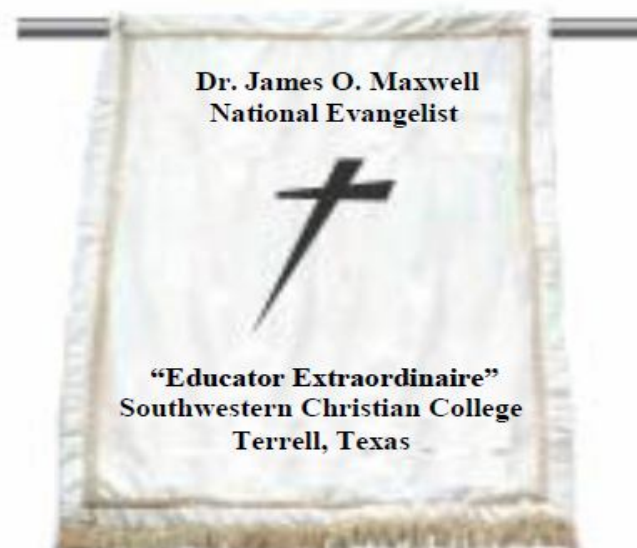
Dr. James O. Maxwell was without question our "Anointed Lion of Loyalty" and one of the most ardent ambassadors of the gospel message among our fraternity of preachers. Needless to say, we will miss his presence and acute ability to "articulate the story" of Jesus Christ our Sovereign Savior as it is written from the pages of divine inspiration.

Therefore, on behalf of the Churches of Christ "Historical" National Lectureship it is our prayer that the great God of heaven will give you inner-peace that surpasses all human understanding. May He also provide you with serenity and strength to face the days ahead with confidence and unrelenting conviction.

Humbly and Respectfully Submitted,

*Dr. W. F. Washington*

Dr. W. F. Washington, Executive Committee Chairman



**Churches of Christ National Lectureship Executive Committee**  
**W. F. Washington, Ph.D., Chairman**  
**P. O. Box 5488**  
**Fort Lauderdale, FL 33310**  
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February 1, 2025

**re: The Honorable Andrew Jasper Hairston, Esq., and Family**

The Executive Committee of the Churches of Christ “Historical” National Lectureship extends to the family of the late Honorable Andrew Jasper Hairston its words of comfort and consolation in regards to the passing of our esteemed comrade in the faith.

Please know that our heartfelt and sincere condolences are extended to you at this most sensitive time. It has been said that “Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, but love leaves a memory no one can steal. Although it is difficult today to see beyond the sorrow, may your looking back in memory bring you solace on tomorrow.”

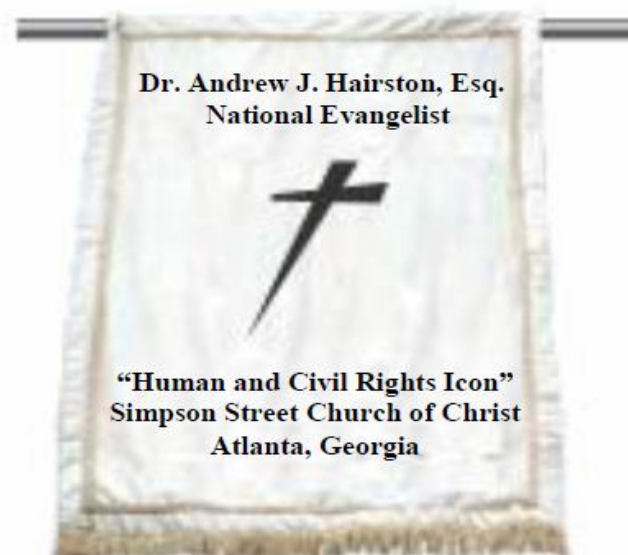
The Honorable Andrew J. Hairston was a celebrated Human and Civil Rights icon who gallantly defended the cause for racial equity throughout our nation; specifically in the city of Atlanta, Georgia. Furthermore, Dr. Andrew J. Hairston was one of the most ardent ambassadors appertaining to the Lord’s visible Kingdom.

Therefore, on behalf of the Churches of Christ “Historical” National Lectureship it is our prayer that the great God of heaven will give you inner-peace that surpasses all human understanding. May He also provide you with serenity and strength to face the days ahead with confidence and unrelenting conviction.

Humbly and Respectfully Submitted,

*Dr. W. F. Washington*

Dr. W. F. Washington, Executive Committee Chairman



## The *Christian Courier* Commemorates Dr. James O'Leary Maxwell Vice-President Emeritus Southwestern Christian College

*"And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines who were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away: he arose, and struck the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword: and the Lord accomplished a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil" {2 Samuel 23:9, 10}.*

The late Dr. James O. Maxwell in our purview can be expressively personified in the same manner of Eleazar. Although Eleazar was only one man, he fought with a distinct level of certitude and conviction "...until his hand was weary..." and he could do no more. It can be said without fear of successful contradiction that as time progressed, both Eleazar and Dr. Maxwell reached the limits of their strength and were therefore obliged to pause.

They did not become weary "OF" fighting, but they became weary "IN" fighting. If you can draw this sublime distinction in your situation it will be good. For you see, as "stewards of the Savior" all of us wish we could serve our Lord day and night absent from mortal impediments. But eventually, the indispositions of the flesh will greet each of us and there will be no more strength left in us.

The Scripture informs us that Eleazar was never fearful of Israel's enemies, for "...he arose, and struck the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword..." Eleazar was a man of marked individuality; he was a man of courageous character; he was a man who knew himself and a man who knew his God. He did not care to become lost in the common crowd so as to retreat simply because others ran. Conversely, Eleazar thought for himself; he acted for himself; he did not allow the conduct of his contemporaries to become the pivotal pinnacle of his personal performance. While others defected and disengaged themselves, Eleazar "...arose, and struck the Philistines."

In like manner, Dr. James O'Leary Maxwell both metaphorically and symbolically speaking can be considered as a modern-day Eleazar. Dr. Maxwell was an educator "par excellence" who authored numerous books and religious compositions which focused upon the New Testament Church of Christ. He was not a self-proclaimed "lion of lure," on the contrary he was our "Anointed Lion of Loyalty," a "Genuine Sir Galahad of God," and a consummate "Warrior of the Word,"

In the spirit of the "Eagle Eye" prophet Elijah, Dr. Maxwell was a distinguished debater for New Testament Christianity and one who "struck the Philistines" of false doctrine "...until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword..."

Furthermore, Dr. Maxwell always postured himself in a professional manner and he respected those with whom he shared sweet communion.

He not only articulated gospel "TRUTH" but he held fast to the "TRADITIONS" of apostolic doctrine. According to some postmodern preachers and teachers of today, they believe and affirm you to be wise if you "change your doctrines" every week; because something that "sounds good" may come to the vestibule of your inner ears.

This abominable advice is not only dangerous, it is diabolically devastating. Young preachers, we trust you as did Dr. James O. Maxwell will get hold of the grand old gospel and always hold on to it without ever relaxing your grip on it. Refuse to align yourself with those who advocate a subjective existential ideology of relativism which denies the Bible to be "ABSOLUTE TRUTH."

Be sober, be vigilant, be alert, and be warned when you hear idiomatic expressions inclusive of terminology such as "emerging church," "reimagining Jesus," "reimagining God," "reimagining Christianity," "reimagining worship," "deconstruction of biblical interpretation," "doctrinal shift," and "hermeneutic of proclamation."

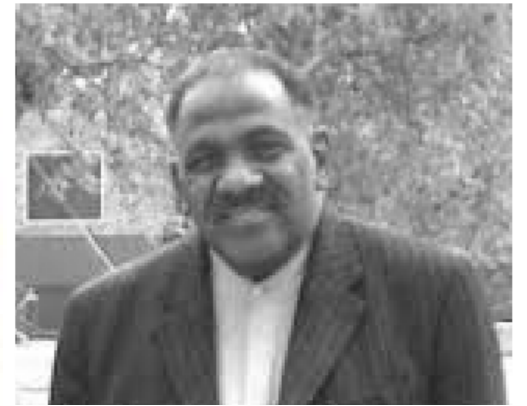
Dare to be an Eleazar! Dare to be a Dr. James O. Maxwell! Go out alone if need be and "strike the Philistines" of false biblical teaching! In doing so, you will discover that there are others who may have concealed their innermost sentiments, but when they see you taking a firm stand on "TRUTH" they will openly declare to be on the Lord's side.

Many are apprehensively unresponsive and many are apparently undecided. However, let them see a brave man who is not ashamed to stand for biblical "TRUTH" and the "TRADITIONS" of our "faith once delivered." In doing so, you like the late Dr. James O'Leary Maxwell whose firm "hand stuck to the sword" will become the standard-bearer around whom they will rally!

### Facts appertaining to the late Dr. James O'Leary Maxwell

James O'Leary Maxwell was born October 13, 1938, to Eddie and Mable Maxwell in the city of Tulsa, Oklahoma. He and his family later moved to Toledo, Ohio, where James matriculated through the Toledo Independent School District. James gave his life to Christ at the tender age of twelve at the Dorr Street Church of Christ in Toledo, Ohio. After graduating from high school he began his college career and earned numerous academic degrees. Dr. James O. Maxwell served as former Vice-President of Institutional Expansion at Southwestern Christian College. He was Academic Dean at SwCC from 1971 to 1978. As Vice-President, he initiated fund-raising campaigns; wrote proposals for public and private grants; prepared news releases of college functions; edited the SwCC Communiqué [the college newspaper], and solicited monetary deferred gifts on behalf of the college. He was also a professor of Bible and Religious Education.

James received an Associate of Arts in 1959 from Southwestern Christian College; Bachelor of Arts in Speech Education from Pepperdine University; Master of Religious Education from Central Theological Seminary; Master of Science in Higher Education from East Texas State University (now Texas A&M-Commerce); and a Master of Theology (Equivalent) from Southern Methodist University. He also earned a Doctor of Ministry from Southern Methodist University and in 2008 an Honorary Doctor of Laws (LL.D.) was conferred upon him by Southwestern Christian College. Dr. Maxwell is author of "There is a Lion in the Way," "The Way of Truth," "Hush Your Mouth," "The Bible and Abortion;" "The Tangled Web of Deceit;" "Super Bowl VII" (a commentary on the symbols in the book of Revelation); "I Can't Come Down;" and "Don't Know Much About Church History." Recently, he authored "No Upreach Without Outreach;" and "Let's Go Back... Way Back!" Many have been immeasurably blessed by the life and ministry of Dr. James O. Maxwell. May he rest in eternal peace with His Lord and the great cloud of witnesses in heaven. (Σ)



**Dr. James O. Maxwell**  
1938-2025  
"Educator Extraordinaire"



## “Is Silence of the Scripture a Permission or a Prohibition?”

Unfortunately, there are several preachers in the African American Church of Christ, who continue to espouse and demonstrate a disrespect for the authority of Scripture. A major tactic of these “new hermeneutic” apostates has been an attempt to depreciate conventional biblical precepts in reference to the “silence of Scripture.” They know that only by eliminating (if possible) adherence to this necessary hermeneutical principle will they be able to accomplish their iniquitous and reprehensible intentions.

Thomas Campbell (1763-1854) one of the leading figures of the Restoration Movement in this country during the 19th century, he along with Alexander Campbell (his son), Barton W. Stone, Walter Scott and several others, sought to abandon the creeds and denominations of men. In a speech given in 1808, at The House of Abraham Altars between Mt. Pleasant and Washington, Pennsylvania, Campbell set forth his ideology that became a motto for the movement. Campbell ended his speech with the declaration: “Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent.”

Less than half a century after Thomas Campbell uttered his famous aphorism, some began, as did Lot’s wife, “to look back” craving for certain unauthorized doctrines and practices they and their fathers had escaped. These men asserted (and their disciples still assert) that Campbell and his early associates meant that “silence is permissive” and where the Bible is silent, we have freedom to act. The first symptom of this attitude surfaced in 1849 with the establishment of the American Christian Missionary Society. The implication given was that the New Testament Church alone is inadequate to fulfill the missionary mandate as commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 16:15, 16, et al.).

When faithful men opposed it as unauthorized, its defenders responded that since the Scriptures were silent concerning such, it was permissible. As early as 1851, scattered congregations began utilizing musical instruments in worship assemblies, but the controversy over them did not become heated until soon after the Civil War ended. As with those who justified the Missionary Society a few years before, apologists for instrumental music pointed to the “silence of the New Testament” concerning the usage of mechanical instruments and presumed upon that “silence” permission is given to employ them.

This approach implied (and implies) that the New Testament Scripture prohibits and excludes doctrinal practices only by explicit “thou shalt not” statements. In addition, this attitude toward Scripture allows “human desires” and “opinions” to determine the work and worship of the New Testament Church as well as personal behavior. Thus, “desire” becomes the fulcrum and father of doctrine rather than New

Testament biblical doctrine, which is a disastrous reversal of direction. Those who pushed these innovations were so determined to have them that they forced a division between the Churches of Christ and the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ.

The modernists thus became the “Disciples of Christ Christian Churches” which has been in the vanguard of liberalism and modernism ever since. The other group prefers the moniker “Independent Christian Churches” although in certain areas of the nation they employ the name Church of Christ; sometimes with “Instrumental” also on their signs.

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In 1984 several men from the Independent Christian Church, along with a number of others, participated in what they called a “Restoration Summit” in Joplin, Missouri. It is documented that one of the speakers from the Independent Christian Church was W. F. Lown, who in the course of his speech, affirmed that “silence gives us freedom to speak” and “liberty begins where Scripture stops.” Predictably, this disdain for scriptural authority has led the Independent Christian Church to introduce other innovations and departures from the faith besides the use of mechanical instrumental music in worship.

The lack of recognition for the importance of scriptural silence is universally found in denominationalism. This alone explains the existence of thousands of denominations and their unauthorized doctrinal practices. Ignoring the “silence” of Scripture leaves religion resting on the shifting sands of existential judgment, personal preference, relativism, and ethical subjectivism.

### **Is Silence Prohibitive?**

New Testament Christians understand that the Bible does not authorize any doctrines or practices by its “silence” concerning them. Subsequently, New Testament scriptural “silence” therefore has a “prohibitive force.” Worship of the primitive churches under the teaching and supervision of the inspired apostles is equivalent to a command for this twenty-first century age. The first-century Church comprehended that the “silence” of the inspired apostles on any subject matter or theme, was to be sacredly and scrupulously regarded as much as the positive teaching.

Those who consider themselves free to do anything not forbidden in Scripture are pretty much cut loose from the Bible. They have their own subjective interpretation of the Scripture,

they are not in search of divine authority, they are not engaged in that for which there is divine authority, but for things where divine authority is not given. If no divine authority can be found for a biblical practice or doctrine, we need no Scripture forbidding it.

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Our worship to God is regulated by laws of God. We have no knowledge of what is well-pleasing to God in worship, save what God has revealed it to us in His holy and inspired Word. The New Testament is the rule and limit of our faith and worship to God. This is the distinctive difference between the New Testament Church of Christ and other religious bodies.

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*Ignoring the “silence” of Scripture leaves religion resting on the shifting sands of existential judgment, personal preference, relativism, and ethical subjectivism.*

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Others may accept the New Testament as their rule of faith, but do not make it the limit of their faith. We seek for things authorized; they seek for things not prohibited. Our rule is safe; their rule is loose and latitudinarian. Our teaching confines us to God’s declarations; their teaching opens the worship and service of God to do whatever will please men.

### **The Law of Inclusion and Exclusion**

We may refer to this principle as a law of inclusion and exclusion or authorization and non-authorization. A key passage regarding biblical authority is Colossians 3:17: “And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” The phrase, “in the name of the Lord Jesus” means “by the authority of the Lord Jesus” (cf. Acts 4:7).

This subject is no more complex than men choose to make it. We must do and say only those things the Lord authorizes through His Word, which authorization is established by the statement, not the silence of Scripture.

When the Lord Jesus Christ and authors of New Testament Scripture are “silent” regarding any action, there is no authority for it; meaning it is implicitly unauthorized and thus prohibited without them having to explicitly forbid it. (Σ)

