



# Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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## Some After Thoughts From "AFTERGLOW"

By  
Jackie M. Stearsman

"AFTERGLOW" is a column written by Phillip Morrison in each issue of the *Wineskins*. Consideration must be given to some of his assertions from the January-February, 1993 issue. One of the primary objectives of the publication and its writers is to convince members of the churches of Christ that they are one denomination among many. According to them, we should agree to disagree religiously. They would mesmerize us into thinking that if we would simply agree to disagree in religious matters that the world would believe our message in larger numbers. If we would but compromise then all could sing our praise.

What these folk are teaching is the same message denominationalism has always taught. Anyone with eyes to see can see that by agreeing to disagree will not convince a

skeptical world of anything. Agreeing to disagree will not solve the divided state of the religious world. Where are there mass unity movements resulting from agreeing to disagree?

These men are wrong Biblically and they do not have a message or system that will work pragmatically either. Reasonable people may know this if they choose. If we do not choose to be reasonable nothing will assist us, and an awesome fate will await us (II Thess. 2:9-12).

### DRAWING CIRCLES

Brother Morrison writes: "Some Christians would draw the circle of fellowship tighter and tighter until it becomes a noose choking the life out of Christ's body on earth." First, let it be understood that it is not we who draw the line but the Lord. It is not the business of

the clay to dictate to the Potter where the limits and dimension of the vessel will be. We have no desire to be in the line drawing business. We do, however, have the God given obligation to know where He has drawn the line. If we want His approval we dare not go beyond it. *"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds"* (II John 9-11). "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though

*we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:6-12). "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:17).*

#### "UNITY IN DIVERSITY"

Brother Morrison continues, *"For some strange reason, the simple expression 'unity in diversity' is rejected as un-biblical and heretical. In fact, it is completely biblical.*

*"Jesus and his apostles were united, but they did not always agree. He taught servanthood, but they desired position and power (Luke 9:46-48). He understood the necessity of making the supreme sacrifice, but they didn't want him to die (Matthew 16:21-23). He taught compassion, but the Sons of*

*Thunder wanted to destroy un-receptive people (Luke 9:51-56)."*[sic]

It is difficult for me to see how anyone could deny the teaching of the Bible more than what is affirmed in the above two paragraphs. **Question:** Did Jesus correct the mistaken ideas advocated by the above illustrations? Indeed He did! Where then is the unity in diversity? **Question:** When Peter withstood Jesus on the way to the cross (Matt. 16:21-23), Jesus said that Peter had taken his stand with the Devil and was not minding the things of God but of man (Matt. 16:23). To affirm "unity in diversity" in the above illustrations is to affirm that men may seek power and position, and may oppose the will of God in any way they choose. Is this the unity these brethren desire for us? I will not be a part of it. Is this the diversity they wish? If this philosophy is employed where is the justification for upholding or opposing anyone or anything? Brethren, such assertions are alarming—we must not remain silent. We must keep the faith; we must fight for the right (II Tim. 4:7).

Our misdirected brother continues with this observation: *"The apostles and early missionaries didn't always agree among themselves. Paul and Barnabas had different ideas about where to go and who to take (Acts 15:36-41). Peter and James differed with certain Judean brothers about the residual requirements of Judaism in Christian age (Acts 15:7-21).*

*"It is our human nature that makes us want people to be like us. We expect our friends to understand God and the Bible as we do."*

I strongly object to the last statement by brother Morrison. I do not want anyone to "understand" the Bible as he does. He misses the teaching again and again.

Seriously, do any of our readers think that Peter and James proposed "unity in diversity" with the false teachers? Read for yourself. *"Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things. . ."* (Acts 15:24-28).

They resolved their differences and were of "one

#### The Harvesters

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accord." Only those with the authority of the Lord behind their attitudes and actions are a part of the faithful. The Lord has drawn a line around those who comprise His people; it is the line of truth (John 17:17). Those making laws (commandments) for the Lord are not recognized by Him or the faithful. That was true then, and it is true today.

I believe brother Morrison and his group know that no informed and faithful child of God has ever advocated that there must be agreement in areas of expediency (Rom. 14). Permitting expediency to operate is as much the truth of the Gospel as is the command to be baptized. When men forbid what God allows it is sin (I Tim. 4:1-9).

The differences between Paul and Barnabas was over a matter of judgment. The judgment had to do with whether to take John Mark with them on the second preaching journey (Acts 15:36-41). To cite this difference of judgment as justification for accepting differences in doctrinal matters is a gross misrepresentation of the truth of the gospel. Such will not go unchallenged!

## THE BROTHERHOOD

The last of brother Morrison's assertions that I wish to consider in this critique is his last sentence in the column. *"If he has made a people his children, they have become my brothers and sisters."*

Because I have a brother does this mean that I must

sanction everything he may do? Must I be silent when I know that he is going in the wrong direction? If I met Judas on the way to deny the Lord must I, since he is a brother, agree that it is proper for him to betray his Master? If I saw him later on the way to hang himself should I not oppose it? Is taking the physical life a greater tragedy than taking spiritual life?

Peter had a brother we know as Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9-24). Was Peter wrong in correcting his brother Simon? Should Peter have preached "unity in diversity" to him and let him go to hell? Does your Bible say that the spiritual should restore brethren overtaken in a fault (Gal. 6:1)? James makes clear our obligation to brethren in sin. We are not to proclaim brotherhood to them and then let them die in sin. *"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins"* (James 5:19-20).

We must not agree with anyone in error, be they brother or not. *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"* (Eph. 5:11).

In conclusion let us never forget the message of John. *"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.* If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie,

and do not the truth" (I John 1:5-6). *"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked"* (I John 2:3-6).



There are no Summer classes this year. Students will be going to Jamaica for two weeks.

Fall Schedule of classes is on the back. **Sign up and encourage others to do so.**

### Florida School of Preaching Graduates

*Men of God have taught you and prepared you well;  
They have manifest steadfastness in teaching you  
God's Word that you, others might tell.  
The world about you is dying in sin;  
Souls are crying out, that to Christ you must win.*

*The teachers, now have their part done;  
It is up to you to carry on the work the Lord begun.  
The Word of God now is in your hearts to take;  
May you faithfully declare it, and from it never forsake.*

*The harvest before you is ready white;  
Enter into the work while God gives you light.  
Remember that night doth come soon,  
Then it will be too late to follow God's tune.*

*You have studied and prepared well for this day,  
All these moments of preparation are now out of the way;  
But the greatest test of all stands now before you,  
"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine" true.*

*If you fail to faithfully in this harvest to reap,  
You, as well as others, will in anguish weep;  
For judgment will come, and alas!  
In God's sight you have failed His test to pass.*

*May you, as others before you, now in the field,  
Proclaim unerringly Christ's Word and His Sword  
faithfully wield.*

*May God bless your efforts with a bountiful harvest,  
And one day be found to enter into God's heavenly rest.*

J.H. Blackman, Jr.  
May 23, 1993

# Registration Schedule

## Florida School of Preaching

### Fall Semester 1993

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Check Classes Desired

Hours	Course	Instructor	Credit
<b>Monday</b>			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	Life of Christ 11317	Davis	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	Logic 31370	Burgett	3
___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Greek 31271	Stearsman	2½
<b>Tuesday</b>			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	Greek 21323	Stearsman	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	Genesis-Exodus 11309	Stilwell	3
___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Psalms 31269	Blackman	2½
<b>Wednesday</b>			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	Revelation 21359	Stearsman	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	Denominational Dogmas 11331	Franklin	3
<b>Thursday</b>			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	Romans 21361	Stearsman	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	I & II Corinthians 11335	Davidson	3
<b>Friday</b>			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	Isaiah-Jeremiah 11313	Stearsman	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	Bible Geography & Archaeology 21329	Franklin	3

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