

The Old Paths

Volume 9, Issue 12

May 19, 2002

“Taking “Andy” To The Next Level”

Jarrod Jacobs

In March of 1999, I wrote an article concerning a current fad (among denominations, and among some brethren) of using episodes of “*The Andy Griffith Show*” in Bible classes. (If you wish, contact me, and I will give you a copy of the original article.) The idea was that certain Bible classes would be started which would show an episode of “*The Andy Griffith Show*” and at the end, allow the students to make comments, etc., from various Bible passages. Their reasoning is: “Since Christ taught in parables, so the people could understand (Matt. 13:34), we will use ‘modern-day’ parables, and teach the people of today.” It has obviously caught on with others, for now, I have received advertisements for classes showing “*The Beverly Hillbillies*” as the subject! I remember that last year I saw a church of God in White Bluff, TN advertise “Beverly Hillbilly” classes on their sign. I wondered what they were talking about at the time, but now I understand!

In my original article, I made the observation that since people were using “Andy” for a Bible class, where will it end? Well, we are seeing an expansion of such foolishness in the adding of “*The Beverly Hillbillies*” to the “Andy Griffith” class. But, I still wonder when the time will come when people reason this way: “Since we are using “Andy” (and “*The Beverly Hillbillies*”) as good examples of what to do, why not show some episodes of “*NYPD*

Blue,” or “*Guiding Light*,” that we might see examples of what NOT to do?” If not, why not? The justification for one type of show applies to other TV shows!

I thought it rather telling that in the advertisement I received, they said that such TV shows could help, among other people, “the world-weary souls of long-time believers.” What? So, if one is “world-weary,” their suggestion is to watch old TV shows which were made by the world! Does this even make good nonsense?

The Social Gospel Run Amok

Such things as we have described are further evidence of the “social gospel” which so permeates our lives. Paul said the gospel of Christ is “*the power of God unto salvation*” (Rom. 1:16), but many today are saying, “No, that’s not enough anymore.” Notice the focus of such “literature”: They wish to get people “in” with the TV show, and then assume they’ll stay for the teaching. Further, they say, “Look how many people are coming to our classes!” Friends and brethren, since when did God look upon “warm bodies” as the be-all and end-all of our success before Him (Deut. 7:7; Matt. 7:14, 20:16)? What command, example, or necessary inference do we find in the Bible which encourages God’s people to “get them in” any way you can, and teach them the gospel once they’re there? This kind of thinking is what motivated our liberal brethren to include kitchens, “fellowship” halls, gyms, ball teams, skits, dramas, scout troops, quilting bees, etc. in their work! They thought if something

would “get them in” they’d keep them with preaching the gospel. That experiment has backfired, and instead has produced worldly groups calling themselves “churches of Christ” that are no different than any denomination in the land. So also this “Andy/Beverly Hillbilly class” will contribute to the digression.

The Wrong Focus

Ultimately, such gimmicks will fail because they are focusing their attention in the wrong place. By using such things as “*The Andy Griffith Show*,” “*The Beverly Hillbilles*,” or anything else for a Bible class, it makes the gospel of Christ secondary, or merely incidental to their coming. How does this spiritually help anyone? It doesn’t!

We need to demand that the Bible be first, second, and last in all we are doing. We need not strive to please men with gimmicks, and the latest fad (remember “holy” laughter?). If we try to please men, we’ll not please God (Gal. 1:10; Jas. 4:4). What Christ said will save the world still works; we just need to get back to using it (Rom. 1:16; II Tim. 4:2; Acts 8:35)!! When we do, we’ll “*turn the world upside down*” as the apostles did in earlier days (Acts 17:6). When we get busy with studying and spreading the gospel to the world, then we’ll not have time for games, gimmicks, and the like.

“Jesus Used Parables”

Yes, our Lord used parables to teach (Matt. 13:34). However, these were for a specific purpose (Matt. 13:35), and not for entertainment of the masses! Our Lord was no story-teller! Christ’s parables were not used to “draw crowds,” but to teach those assembled; just as the purpose of miracles was to confirm the word (Jn. 2:23, 3:2) and not for a side-show or a money-maker.

May we be satisfied with simply teaching the gospel of Christ in its purity and simplicity without gimmicks (I Cor.

“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk

Our Members Write

"The Crucifixion Of Jesus Christ"

Jay Norris, Philpot, KY

It is an undisputed fact of the gospel "that Christ died" for our sins according to the Scriptures (I Cor. 15:3). The death of Jesus Christ is an astonishing event. It can not be too reverently pondered or too closely examined. Millions of men have died, but only one Christ has died. All men who have passed into the valley of the shadow of death have done so because of sin (Rom. 5:12). Christ only has died for sin (I Pet. 2:24).

The death of Jesus Christ upon the cross is not appreciated alike by all people. To the world, it is mere foolishness. Paul wrote, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18). Paul named the unbelievers: "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom" (I Cor. 1:22). To the children of God, the message of the crucifixion is the power of God (I Cor. 1:18). The crucified Christ constitutes the center of our teaching: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (I Cor. 1:23).

The writers of the four gospels give us their respective accounts of the crucifixion in Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19. We are certainly impressed with the brevity of the crucifixion account. What control the inspired writers must have exercised as they put pen to paper to describe history's most important death. For our consideration, we have these words from the beloved physician, "And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left" (Lk. 23:33). Please note the expression, "There they crucified him...". Although brief, these words are very descriptive. This we shall

reveal as we examine each word for its bearing upon the subject.

"**THE** They Crucified Him"

The name of the place where they crucified Christ was called, Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a skull. History tells us it is a rock ledge about thirty feet high, bearing a striking resemblance to a human skull. It is a conspicuous place. It was near the city of Jerusalem (Jn. 19:20). It was also close to a busy thoroughfare into and out of the city, allowing passers-by to observe those being crucified (Matt. 27:39). It was an appropriate place, being outside the gates of Jerusalem. The reason it was appropriate is because sin offerings of the Mosaic dispensation were made "outside the camp" (Ex. 29:14). Like the sacrificial victim, Jesus suffered "outside the gate" (Heb. 13:11-12).

"There **THEY** Crucified Him"

The word "they" includes all who had a part in the crucifixion of Christ. This would include Jews. They did not do the actual deed, but it was done to please them. They were murderers in heart, but not in deed. The blood, however, was on their wicked hands (Acts 2:23)!

Also in the lineup was Judas Iscariot, Annas, Caiphas, Pilate, and Herod. Actually carrying out the cruel deed were the Roman soldiers, led by a centurion. In a sense "they" includes all of us, for it was sin that nailed Christ to the cross (see: Rom. 3:23). John said, "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I Jn. 2:2). Let it be

clarified that we do not crucify Him like they did, unless we crucify Him "afresh." This we do by apostasy from the faith (Heb. 6:6).

"There They **CRUCIFIED** Him"

Death by crucifixion was not a custom of the Jews, but was a Roman mode of punishment. Rome, during times of war, crucified deserters, thieves, and conquered rebels. In peacetime, it was punishment allotted out frequently to slaves. Crucifixion was, above all things, a painful and humiliating form of execution. There was the preliminary scourging (Matt. 27:26). This was routinely done. In Hebrew law, the number of strokes was limited to forty. The Pharisees reduced it to thirty-nine in the interest of not exceeding the law (see: II Cor. 11:24). The victim was made to carry his own cross to the place of execution (Jn. 19:17). After having been scourged, the beam was placed behind the condemned man's neck, then, strapped to his chest, outstretched arms, and hands. Jesus made reference to this procedure to be used on Peter in John 21:18-19.

The One on this cross was not just another criminal, nor was He just a man. He was the Christ! Jesus Christ: The suffering One (Isa. 53; Acts 8:36); The innocent One (Matt. 27:19, 24); The reviled One (I Pet. 2:23); Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Matt. 27:54).

The crucifixion of Christ is the greatest demonstration of the love of God for man (Rom. 5:8). What else would cause the Lord to submit to what history called, "the most cruel and hideous of punishments"? It can only be God's divine love for sinful man. O, the cost of sin! O, the price of the church.

Past Bulletins Are Posted At:
www.southside-churchofchrist.com

I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!

Come and meet with the church at Southside.
Our address is: 2920 New Hartford Rd. Owensboro, KY 42303.

MEETING TIMES:

Sunday Morning Bible Study ————— **9:30 am**
Sunday Morning Worship ————— **10:20 am**
Sunday Evening Worship ————— **6:00 pm**
Wednesday Evening Bible Study ————— **7:00 pm**

Don't forget the call-in radio program on **WBIO, FM 94.7**, Sunday afternoon from 12:30-1:00 pm. **Call: 683-9246** or **683-5200** with your Bible question.

Preacher/Editor: Jarrod Jacobs

Phone: (270) 683-5386

Website address: www.southside-churchofchrist.com (Updated weekly!)

"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk