



By Alan Adams

Two disciples of Jesus, brought into the band of the twelve apostles, were “Matthew, the publican” and “Simon, the zealot (Zelotes, KJV)” (Acts 1:13; Matthew 10:3). Jewish publicans, such as Matthew, worked for the occupying Roman government collecting Roman taxes from their compatriots. The Jews chafed under the yoke of Roman bondage, but a special contempt and hatred were reserved for what they perceived as backstabbing, tax collecting traitors. They were ranked right along with “sinners” (Matthew 9:11), “harlots” (21:31-32), and the “heathen” (18:17). An ancient document (99 AD) tells of an agreement to pay “for the salary of the swordbearer.” They needed the services of a Roman soldier to serve as a bodyguard to protect them from their own countrymen.

The “zealots” were a militant group of Jews devoted to resisting their overlords. They resorted to violence and assassinations in their resistance. They were very fanatical, like those “Jews (who) banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul” (Acts 23:12). The assassin’s blade of the “zealots” would have been especially sharpened against a “publican.”

Yet Matthew, the publican, and Simon, the zealot, became brothers in Christ. Little wonder that Isaiah described the Age of Christ as a time when “the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6). How pitiful that some are yet looking for a time when nature’s predators and prey will become friends. This prophecy is speaking of people, and it is happening in this present age, just as it happened with Matthew and Simon. The gospel is still the only power in this world to purge crookedness and hatred from the hearts of men. Foolish Americans vainly imagine that their politicians can solve problems that are exclusively the purview of the Prince of Peace. (103 S. Willow - Cowan, TN 37318)

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Jim E. Waldron, Editor
P.O. Box 123
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AL GORE & HINDUISM

In 1991 then Sen. Gore unveiled his enviro-theology at the annual earth mass of the Episcopal cathedral of St. John the divine in New York. Such services typically include the taped cry of a timber wolf and the aquatic grunts of a humpback whale, and prayers to Ra (ancient Egypt’s sun god) and other ecologically friendly deities. In attendance were major mainline church leaders and the secretary general of the national Council of Churches (AFA *Journal*, May 1997).

Mr. Gore said, “And if God is within us, is God not also within other living things? Is God not also in the rest of Creation? We are not separate from the earth, God is not separate from the earth.”

Gaia, the ancient Greek earth goddess, frequently appears in the green crusades literature, including Mr. Gore’s *Earth in the Balance*. If this goes unchecked, many will end up worshipping tumblebugs, like the Egyptians did long ago. Paganism is always just around the corner. *Firm Foundation*, March 1998, page 25.

Note: We worship the Creator not the created (See Romans 1:20-23). The philosophy expressed by Vice-President Gore is Hindu Theology. Brahma is said to be the world soul that inhabits all.

JEFF WALLING & THE INSTRUMENT

Jim E. Waldron

Churches of Christ in the United States about 100 years ago were in a life and death struggle for their very existence with a strong digressive movement. Isaac Errett of Cincinnati, editor of *The Christian Standard*, took the position that instrumental music in worship was not commanded, but it was a matter of opinion. Due to this approach and the popularity of instruments hundreds of churches across Ohio, Indiana and other places were caught up in the so-called progressive movement and swept from the old paths of the gospel into the ranks of denominationalism. Had Errett taken a frontal approach through the pages of *The Standard* he might not have had such an impact. The devil is using the same ploy in this generation by saying to the young people in the churches of Christ, instruments of music in worship are just a matter of opinion.

Jeff Walling of the Providence Road church in Charlotte, NC has been making this argument for years. For example, as far back as 1981 he publicly took such a stand. That year the church of Christ at 816 N. Andover Rd, Andover, Kansas 67002 held a youth rally at the local high school. Brother Walling was a guest speaker.

During a panel discussion, which was moderated by Chuck Northrop (610 Elmwood Dr. Cleveland, OK 74020), a question was asked about the scripturalness of instrumental music in worship. Northrop correctly affirmed such was not authorized and showed from Ephesians 5:19 and other scriptures that acappella music is. At this point Walling, who was not on the panel, came to the platform and in the presense of the young people literally pushed Northrop away from the podium and declared, instrumental music in worship is simply “a matter of opinion...a gray area.” Walling has continued to advocate that same position over the years. (See *Behold The Pattern*, 5114 Montclair, Colleyville, TX 76034, p. 215).

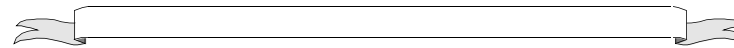
It is a matter of historical record that Isaac Errett’s position brought much division, sorrow and heartache to the churches of Christ of his generation. Jeff Walling is doing the same today in youth rallies and lecture series. The brethren who constitute the board of directors of the “Christian Jubilee, Inc.” ought to know these things, but they are set to perpetuate more division and heartache in Middle Tennessee this summer, because they have Walling scheduled as one of their keynote speakers, July 1-4. These men are like those described by the Holy Spirit, “by good words and fair speeches (they) deceive the hearts of the simple” (Romans 16:18).

ARE SOME SAVED IN IGNORANCE?

Wayne Jackson

It is not uncommon to hear some argue that those who never have the opportunity to hear the gospel will be saved in spite of their lack of obedience. This assertion, of course, stands in vivid contradiction to the inspired affirmation that the Lord will render vengeance “to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel” (2 Thes. 1:8; cf. Lk 12:47).

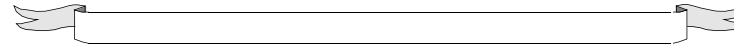
If those who are lost can be saved in their unbelief, it would be better to leave them in that state, for once they are exposed to the truth, and then reject it, they surely will be condemned. Thus, all mission work should be suspended. Furthermore, since it is also the case that everyone is held accountable for the degree of knowledge he possesses (Heb. 10:29; Jas. 3:1), we might do well to not educate the church. In this way we would not intensify the punishment of those who defect from the faith and finally are lost. This implies that the whole system of gospel instruction is meaningless. The notion that “ignorance is bliss” is absurd on the face of it. (P.O. Box 55265, Stockton, CA 95203)



COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

“I do not want to be *anywhere*, at *any time*, with *anyone*, doing *anything*, that would in *any way* detract from my influence for the Master.”

Goebel Music



OUR REAL & CONTINUING LOSS

Ronald Reagan

“These children...will never laugh, never sing, never experience the joy of human love; nor will they strive to heal the sick, or feed the poor, or make peace among nations. Abortion has denied them the first and most basic of human rights, and we are infinitely poorer for their loss. We are poorer not simply for the lives not led and for contributions not made, but also for erosion of our sense of worth and dignity of every individual. To diminish the value of one category of human life is to diminish us all.”

FAITH HEALERS

Jim E. Waldron

The miracles of the Lord Jesus and the Apostles recorded in the New Testament were genuine. Even his enemies admitted He did “many signs” or miracles (John 11:47). The miracles by the Lord and the Apostles were to confirm the revelation of the gospel while it was in oral or spoken form (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:1-4). However, when God’s revelation of His will to man was perfect or complete the confirming signs were to cease (I Corinthians 13:3-13).

During the first century before God gave His completed or perfected revelation the signs were necessary to confirm the spoken word. Since it has been spoken, confirmed and written down as it is now in the 66 books of our Bible, the confirming signs are no longer necessary. With the death of the last Apostle (around AD 98) the miraculous gifts ceased for they were the ones who supplied miraculous spiritual gifts (Acts 8:18).

However, in our day we have a group of so-called faith healers who exploit the masses for money. They claim the power to heal if you have enough faith. They cannot heal a pin scratch.

If these modern miracle workers can heal as they claim like Christ and the Apostles, why do they not travel to the poverty stricken third world countries and cleanse the leper, give sight to the blind, restore the limbs of the paralytic? In many places of Africa, Asia and Latin America vast numbers of people suffer from such debilitating afflictions.

Why do they not, even here in America, go to the burn centers for children and the cancer treatment centers and send the patients home, made well.

They cannot, but prefer to hawk their brand of charismatic hype on TV. Benny Henn is about as believable as Friday night wrestling.