

does not mean keeping something stolen whether it be another man's watch, his car, his house or even his wife.

Some of our brethren no longer believe, preach or practice what they once did relative to repentance. They have had to change Bible definitions of repentance to fit their newer and more novel views of what to do with a stolen wife subsequent to baptism. So-called repentance has reached a disastrous low in brotherhood thinking when men will advocate that stolen watches, cars and houses have to be returned in the name of genuine repentance but stolen wives can be retained and with God's full approval; that the water of baptism takes care of stolen husbands and/or wives. But baptism does not wash away husbands and wives to which people have never had possessive rights in God's sight!

Yes, there is a cause and too much has not been said and written yet on the side of truth. As long as errors relative to marriage, divorce and remarriage are taught then lovers of truth have no alternative other than to keep active their tongues and pens in upholding the majesty of marriage and the holiness of the home. P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063

SHALL WE SPLINTER The above material from the pen of Robert Taylor comes from a book he published in 1992 as a review of an earlier book by James D. Bales "Shall We Splinter." Yet, it is far more than comments on the Bales' book. For example, it starts with a synopsis of many doctrines that have troubled our brotherhood over the past 150 years including the missionary society, instruments of music in worship, premillennialism, the doctrine of forbidding brethren, liberalism, neo-pentecostalism, Crossroadism and Bible versions. It thoroughly deals with the heresy that sinners in the world are not amenable to the gospel of Christ. I had not read this book until very recently and I was thrilled. It needs to be in the hands of every elder, Bible class teacher, and gospel preacher young and old. Order from brother Taylor. One copy is \$4.25 and ten are \$35 - post paid. Send check or money order to Taylor Publications, P. O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063. Jim Waldron

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BALES-ISM

Robert Taylor

When error rises and establishes its beachhead at our very doorsteps, the forces of truth must also rise with sword in hand and do battle till error is eliminated and truth alone occupies the battle arena. Do we have a cause in the matter of marriage, divorce and remarriage? Indeed we do, and the matter is more momentous than what David and physical Israel faced in southwest Palestine three thousand years ago (I Samuel 17:8-28). If they lost to Goliath and the pagan Philistines, they faced physical serfdom to their pagan Palestinian neighbors. But people in physical slavery, not desirable and very painful we grant readily, can still be faithful to God and go home to heaven at last. Not so with this momentous matter.

People cannot thwart God's law for marriage and divorce according to their whimsical wills, enter into multiple adulterous remarriages and die in such without placing in peril their very souls. This is the very direction too many preachers, elders and congregations are now headed. Too many are saying that we need to drop all such contentions relative to marriage, divorce and remarriage and get on with the business of converting souls. If Bales-ism is true, we do not have any souls out there to convert for they are not even amenable to the gospel that we have to take to them!

Furthermore, are we going to convert souls to truth and have them placed into congregational settings all over our brotherhood where unscriptural divorces and adulterous remarriages are the order of the day? Becoming Christians demands repentance, and repentance, the Biblical brand of it — not Bales' brand —

**OH, FOR AN HONEST
FALSE TEACHER**

Rubel Shelley

Of certain false teachers, John wrote: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they are not of us" (1 John 2:19).

The false teachers under consideration in this text had not arisen from the heathen world to challenge Christianity. They had arisen from within the church itself! They had become apostates from the truth. They were no longer "of us," i.e., they did not possess the spirit of obedience which was characteristic of faithful disciples, for if they had possessed such a spirit they "would have continued with us."

In refusing to be obedient to the gospel and in teaching another gospel, these individuals had revealed themselves and severed their ties with faithful churches. Can anything good be said about such apostates as these? Yes! They were honest! When these former members of the Lord's church came to repudiate the basic tenets of the faith, they were honest enough to indicate as much and make a clean break with the church. So, before you conclude that there is nothing good to be said for any false teacher, consider the matter of honesty. **Surely we can have more respect for a man who is honest and open about his convictions (or lack of them) than for a man who no longer believes the basic doctrines of the gospel but seeks to stay within the body of believers as a subversive.** Such a person is not only a heretic Christian, he is a dishonest man! Oh, for an honest false teacher!

Now there are false teachers in our brotherhood today. For example, one preacher recently told me that he no longer believes it necessary to contend for the historicity of the virgin birth. Another recently denied the inerrancy of the Word of God in a speech I heard. Yet these men--knowing full well that their views are contrary to the convictions which have characterized our brotherhood from Pentecost to the present day--have made known their intentions to "stay within the fellowship" of the churches of Christ. I suppose they intend to enlighten the backward brotherhood of which they have been a part! But such men as those mentioned above (and I fear they are not the only preachers and teachers who feel this way) have developed a special conscience which excuses their deceitfulness and treachery. They are quick to point out that they have reached these unorthodox opinions in all sincerity and with no evil intent--often in the name of "scholarship." While I do not question the sincerity with which they came to their present views, I do question their honesty in remaining within our brotherhood after they

have come to hold such!"

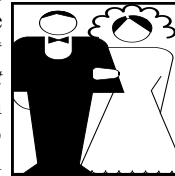
College professors, preachers, Sunday school teachers or "just plain members" who have come to question or disagree with the Bible had best stop and weigh their position carefully. If, upon such thorough investigation, they decide that they are no longer "of us," let them be honest enough to break with us openly and quit their unmanly treason! Gospel Advocate May 6, 1971

*"...I do question their
honesty in remaining
within our brotherhood..."*

BALES-ISM IN THAILAND

Jim E. Waldron

The doctrine of Bales affirms that sinners in the world are not amenable to the law of Christ. Specifically the proponents of this doctrine seek to strictly limit Jesus' teaching on marriage, divorce and remarriage (MDR) (Matt. 5:31-32; 19:6-12) to members of the church of Christ who are married to members of the church of Christ. They claim Jesus' law on MDR does not apply to Buddhists, Hindus, Moslems, Catholics, Protestants, atheists, agnostics, infidels, etc. Yet, Jesus did not base His marriage law on what would be applicable for those in the church from Pentecost, but He applied God's law (Matt. 19:5) from creation to all descendants of Adam and then imposed His own rule (Mark 10:6-12). He *therefore God has joined asunder*" (Matt. 19:6). He one exception, that is, for divorce a mate who is guilty of fornication (Matt. 19:9).



There are few places in the world that the doctrine of Bales has done more damage to the Lord's cause than in Thailand. In the late 1970s a 103 page unpublished manuscript on MDR was produced by Ted Stewart of the Sunset School of Preaching. In that paper Stewart took to task Thomas Warren, Roy Deaver and Jim Massey for their opposition to the doctrine of Bales.

In the early 80s this material was used in Thailand by men of Sunset and Abilene to split the missionary force and local churches. In December 1981 Lorin Hollingsworth, who is still in Thailand, called a meeting of all former students of the Bangkok Bible School to a camp site in ChaAm near Bangkok and taught that he "had been keeping people out of the kingdom for too long" because of the "traditional" teaching on MDR. Joe Bagby, also a former student of Sunset, Kelly Davidson and Larry Henderson, graduates of Abilene Christian University, stood shoulder to shoulder with Hollingsworth in promoting the doctrine of Bales as it had been glorified by Stewart. These brethren used this doctrine to undermine the work of men like Dorsey Traw, Ted Lindgren and Subin Panboon.

At least five churches with which Traw had worked for years were captured by these promoters of Bales-ism in the north near ChiangMai, even though they themselves were located 435 miles to

the south in Bangkok. Wherever these followers of Bales and Stewart got the upper hand they did like the society crowd did in the U. S. 125 years ago. They took the church and its property. Specifically, in three locations — Sa-Lingam, The Farm, and Necomb — they took most of the congregation, the building and the land from the faithful saints. The results of this division begun in 1980-81 still hangs as a cloud over the work of Christ in Thailand. It is a land where polygamy is practiced and men have wives and minor wives. Yet men like Hollingsworth, Gim Wirasak Voritskul and others, still promote the doctrine "Christ's law doesn't apply to them." Well did the Spirit speak of such men in Paul's day, "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil. 3:18).

My wife and I were in Hong Kong from November 1979 to July 1982 and on numerous occasions I was invited to Thailand to lecture on the amenability of all men to the law of Christ on MDR. I sought to get Hollingsworth to defend his doctrine publicly, but he would not. Although he was quite willing to uphold Bales-ism to the young and unsuspecting he wanted no part of a public meeting where his doctrine could be called into question. I wrote to Ted Stewart in Lubbock, TX and tried to get him to repudiate his error or defend it, but he would not. Jerry Moffitt also tried to get Stewart to renounce his doctrine or defend it, but he declined. By the pen of the apostle Paul the Holy Spirit said, "brethren note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). These men are guilty of causing such division and churches here in the U. S. who support them are bidding them God speed (See 2 John 9-11).

All men are amenable to the law of Christ for it is His one universal standard for morals, ethics and right conduct (Mark 16:15; Acts 17:30-31). Bales-ism proclaims non-Christians are subject to a mystical law of the heart, not the gospel. Foolishness! For the prophet said long ago, "Oh Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23).