

## THE OAKWOOD ROAD

# CONTENDER

"...exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith..."

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### OF FAITH OR IGNORANCE

For years Christians have stressed the teaching of God that "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6). We also have insisted that this faith must not be founded upon the traditions or the thinking of men; it must come by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). Still, in every age we find some that allow their zeal to lead them away from the "faith once for all delivered" (Jude 3) into the realms of human wisdom. As Paul stated it in Romans 10:2,3; "For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God."

Repeatedly in his work Paul sought to stem this tide of ignorance and began many of his lessons with "I would not have you ignorant" (Rom. 1:13; 1 Cor. 10:1; 2 Cor. 1:8; 1 Thess. 4:13). He labored night and day to this end that they might know the whole counsel of God (Acts 20: 27), and that they would be without excuse on the day of judgment. Since we have this knowledge today, we also are without excuse if we practice that which is not of faith.

If Paul were to walk among us today, would he not think he was back in Athens? Could he not look among us and see many objects and ways of worship? Surely his heart would cry out that we were very religious but there was much being done in ignorance. He

would tell us that God is no more dependent upon the hand of man today than he was then. Still we build, in the name of God, countless institutions that are foreign to his word in a vain hope he will accept this tribute of our hands. If they are not found in his word then they can not be of faith and they will not be accepted of the Lord.

It is often stated by those in favor of these works of men, that it is better to do something than to do nothing. A Christian can not be true to God and not work. He must do the will of God at all times. However, the doing of works for the sake of appearance is condemned by the scriptures. Should some of these things be right in themselves it still would be a sin to practice them on the say of a preacher or at the command of some eldership - until we have been convinced it is a work of faith, i.e., authorized in the word of God (which to date has not been done). Though it be right to eat meat it became a sin to those who ate without faith for "whatsoever is not of faith is a sin" (Rom. 14:23).

Perhaps one of the best and oldest examples of this is found in the book of Genesis. Cain and Abel both desired to worship God and both offered him a sacrifice. I do not doubt but that both of them felt like they were doing a good work; that which Cain offered may have cost more in a monetary sense and in time than did that given by Abel, but Moses said that God had not respect for Cain and his offering (Gen. 4:5). We read in Hebrews (11:4) that, "by faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." It does not say that Abel did more or gave more than his brother, but it does tell us he

did what God had commanded.

There are congregations today whose works are many and mighty, but that which they do has not been spelled out by God in His word. Why then should we expect it to be any more acceptable than the offering of Cain? In Matthew we are told "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, ...and by thy name do many mighty works" (Matt. 7:22)?

Yes, the works were mighty and they were done in the name of the Lord, but God was not pleased as they had not done according to his will (Matt. 7:21).

Let us continually examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13:5) and the scriptures (Acts 17:11) lest our work be without faith, thus vain in the eyes of the almighty God. "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent" (Acts 17:30). There is much that we can and need to do. Cast aside all the works and pressures of men; Reject the councils of the "many;" hold fast the word of God that we may walk by faith (2 Cor. 5:7), and thus be well pleasing in the sight of God.

- Vic McCormick

Article appeared in Truth Magazine January 1963.

**Men's Training Class**  
**May 13, 2017**  
**11:00 AM**  
**LEADING IN THE WORSHIP**

## **REMINDERS**

How are we using the Big Picture of the Bible book and the cards?

Are we handing out the cards and telling others of our website?

Are we inviting people to our worship assemblies?

Let's make it a priority to reach as many people as we can to teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Remember Lisa is putting together a ladies Bible study, take advantage of this opportunity!

Utilize the website in teaching others

**[www.orcoc.org](http://www.orcoc.org)**

## **DAILY BIBLE READING**

April 30	1 Chrn. 4-6
May 1	1 Chrn. 7-9
May 2	1 Chrn. 10-12
May 3	1 Chrn. 13-15
May 4	1 Chrn. 16-18
May 5	1 Chrn. 19-21
May 6	1 Chrn. 22-25

## **NEWS AND NOTES**

Keep in mind our members who are having health problems, other as well - Lisa's father, Jo's parents.

Men's business meeting May 7th after evening worship.

If you had requested CD's from previous meeting and did not get them, let me know which one and how any copies you want.