

The Tanner St Church of Christ meets each Lord's Day beginning with Bible classes at **9:30 AM**. We continue with our worship at **10:20 AM** and again at **5:00 PM**. We also meet each Wednesday evening at **7:00 PM** for Bible study and worship. Our meeting place is located about ¾ of a mile from I30 at 1512 Tanner St in Malvern, AR.

If you have questions about what we believe and teach, please visit our website, [tannerst.com](http://tannerst.com) to listen to sermons or read past articles from our bulletin. Or you can contact us and we will be glad to find a convenient time to study with you.

Phone: (501) 332-8806 Email: [preacher@tannerst.com](mailto:preacher@tannerst.com)

**Consider: Ephesians 6:1-4**

## **Needed News**

**Bill Venable** went for some test last Friday and should be getting his kidney stones dealt with this week. In addition to twice a month shots for her respiratory health, **Paula Laubach** is to see a surgeon about her knee problem this week. **Phyllis Jackson** is doing better as are **Chris & Addison Wright**. **Brenda Keisler** had her other nerve procedure done last week. **Conard Harris, Doline Fain** and others of our number also continue to deal with health issues.

**Dan & JoBeth Henderson** will be leaving Thursday for Texas. Dan will be preaching for the Hwy 79 congregation in Henderson, TX March 8-11 in a Gospel Meeting. This is where **JoBeth's Mom**, Jo Melton, attends. Thursday, March 12 they will go to Beaumont to attend Ruth Henderson's senior recital. They should return sometime Friday March 13.

**Gospel Meeting**, March 29– April 1, Terry Sumerlin

# *Seeking His Righteousness*

*"...seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.." Matthew 6:33*

March 2015

Volume 4 Number 09

## **What Is The Difference?**

Irven Lee

An instrument of music was introduced into the worship at Midway, Kentucky about 1858. This innovation moved slowly among churches in the North and finally came to the South about 1900. Of course, the church support of the missionary society and other central collecting and disbursing organizations came with the instrument. The intra church organizations also came along about the same time, as well as church sponsored entertainment and fraternization with the Protestant denominations who taught that one is saved at the point of faith before obedience.

If a stranger had come to some little town in the early part of this century and had inquired as to the location of the meeting place of the church, some local man might have asked, "Which one?" The stranger might then have asked; "What is the difference?" He would have been told that one used instruments of music and the other did not. Division usually came when the instrument was added. Actually, the social gospel and the church support of manmade institutions also marked the difference, but these facts were not so conspicuous to the neighbors at first. Even the churches themselves gave almost nothing but lip service to the societies with an occasional small token gift of money.

The greatest difference of all was not seen or generally realized. The real difference was in the attitude toward the Bible. Those who brought in the innovations would say that the Bible does not say that we should not have these things. To them the silence of the scriptures meant liberty to add samples of human wisdom. Those who did not approve of the instrument and the societies pointed out that these things were without New Testament authority. They were not

commanded, implied, or taught by approved example. To them it was a sin to go beyond that which was written (2John 9; Rev. 22:18-19; 1Pet. 4:11; 2Pet. 1:3) Those who approved the changes thought of themselves as progressives. They were bringing in the things that were similar to the practices of the neighboring religious bodies so they would not be so "narrow" (different). In their sight, those who opposed the innovations were non-progressives. Then, as always, the church division was accompanied by bitterness. One group thought that the others were fanatics, hair-splitters, moss backs, antis, and non-progressives even though they were teaching and practicing what their fathers and grandfathers and the Bible taught.

The "progressives" carried most of the members in this movement which was more popular with the religious organizations about them. It was a move in their direction. The progressives wanted to be more acceptable to their neighbors. They were tired of the word "narrow" even though our Lord spoke of the way that leads to life as being narrow (Matt. 7:13,14). Finer buildings were erected, kitchens were added, and plans were made to have more fun and "fellowship." There was less emphasis on the fellowship often mentioned in the New Testament. That fellowship was with God and with fellow soldiers in earnestly contending for the faith. The battle with denominational errors in faith and practice gradually came to a halt where the instrument and other innovations came into favor. The progress of the progressives was not in winning the fight against error in the good warfare (1Tim. 1:18; 2Tim. 4:7; Eph. 6:10-20).

Emotionalism and sensationalism came with the progressive movement. The interest came to be in numbers, prominent members, good buildings, and social recognition in the community. These ideas and practices did not come to every place at the same time or to every member to the same degree. There was a package of things to be accepted, and some would offer resistance at times; but the machine was moving rapidly by the time the instrument was added. Big changes in attitude had already come or it would never have been added. Changes continued to such an extent that

those who first added the instrument would be shocked by the "Disciples" today if they could come back to life and walk in among their descendants in religion. It would be hard for them to believe that they were more than distant cousins.

Typical arguments for the instruments of music were: (1) David used them; (2) Others use them; (3) We like them; (4) The Bible does not say that we cannot have them. These arguments are as strong as they could make; they are not indications of their desire to please God in the church that is according to His eternal purpose. They had reorganized the church until they could speak of "our church, our money, and our business." Their desire was the final and highest law. To speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where it is silent was too narrow for them.

The only choice the "non-progressives" had was to go along with the innovations or get out and worship with the few kindred spirits they could find. They might meet in some one's living room, a store building, a court room, or a school house. In several years, they would reach a point where they could build a meeting house of their own on some little inexpensive lot. These "anti's" were almost always the members with less money and with less social prestige. There was a sense of responsibility (often too weak) that caused them to start one little church after another in communities all around the good building where the "progressives" met and continued to become more and more progressive. By the late thirties, this growth of the more conservative people became rather amazing. In the more rapid growth of the forties many came to these conservative churches from the religious groups about them. Some of them were not fully converted, and teaching was inadequate in many places. They were not grounded sufficiently in the basic teachings of the one body and the importance of doing all things according to the pattern. The progressive, social gospel, and institutional spirit started among them. In the last thirty or so years, history has been repeating itself in a very vivid way. It is easy to see that attitude, arguments, bitterness, and the back to denominationalism movement are the same as they were a few decades earlier.