

January 2003

## The Sword and Trowel



On October 25, the CRA honored the above gentlemen at the Restoration Banquet at Symposium 2002. Three men, Ed Bousman, Lloyd Pelfrey and Clarence Greenleaf (not able to attend), were given the Sword and Trowel Award of the CRA. The award is given in recognition of the lifelong ministries of these men in defending the faith (Sword) and building the Kingdom (Trowel).

**Ed Bousman** speaks to more people each week than any preacher we have. His "God is Just A Prayer Away" radio program can be heard all over the world on radio (AM, FM, and shortwave).

**Lloyd Pelfrey** has spent his life in a teaching/preaching ministry. He helped begin Central Christian College of the Bible in Moberly, MO, and continues today as a teaching professor after retiring from the Presidency of the school.

**Clarence Greenleaf** is the longtime minister (retired) of the Grundy, VA, congregation and founder of the National Prayer Clinic. Through the Bible Institute at Grundy he has trained a multitude of church leaders and preachers.

**Bob Stacy** was also given a special honor for his 30+ years of writing a regular column in *The Restoration Herald*. Through his writings, he has been an encourager and trainer of ministers and church leaders around the world.

All of these gentlemen are men who have given themselves to Christ and His church for many years. The words of Hebrews 13:7 are certainly true when referring to these men:

*"Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith."*

The CRA thanks these men for their wonderful example of following Christ.

**Mini-Messages....** Will the good brother from Indiana who contacted me about trees and landscaping please call me ASAP. I'm sorry, but I lost your name and number. You may be able to help us....Please get hold of John Wilson's biography, *"A Vessel Molded and Used By The Potter."* You will not be disappointed! Contact the First Christian Church in Springfield, OH for a copy....Tapes and manuscripts of Symposium 2002 are available. See the ads in this month's *RH*....More seminars are being planned for 2003. What a great chance to spend time learning how to be more effective in the kingdom. Watch for more announcements....Please remember the CRA with a year-end gift. We have a great need at this time. Also, remember to pray for the ministry of the CRA as we remain faithful to the work of Christ. LM

February 2003

## The Tree that Love Grew

A lovely tree, a picture of which is on the front page of this issue, hangs in the hallway of the Bream-Burrus Building of the Christian Restoration Association. It is a tree that was grown by love.

When we first began the process of preparation for this beautiful facility, we gave information about this tree, not knowing if it would grow or not. We made an announcement that those who send in a gift of \$500 earmarked for the new building would have a leaf on the tree. Churches and organizations were told that they could provide a leaf for \$1,000. "Rocks" at the bottom of the tree indicate those who gave in excess of \$5,000. The tree blossomed and grew to what it is today. It continues to grow and others continue to give to fill the blank "leaves" on the tree.

I want to make some observations about this "Love Tree."

**1. Seeds were planted long ago for this tree.** For 80 years the CRA has been helping the churches through the starting of The Cincinnati Bible Seminary, promoting of the Christian Service Camp movement, starting churches, making loans, defending the faith and the churches from takeover by the Disciples of Christ, starting direct-support of missions, training leadership, counseling churches and ministers, and most of all, evangelizing. There is not a person in the independent fellowship of Christian churches/churches of Christ who has not been touched by the ministry of the CRA.

**2. Cultivation of the tree was extensive.** For 80+ years the CRA has been a "Helping Hand to the Churches." Faithful brethren have been there caring for the CRA and helping her in her time of need as her Trustees and Directors have guided her in his great ministry.

**3. Watering of the tree was often sacrificial.** It has amazed me as I stand and look at the names on the tree. I see names of faithful missionaries who have spent their lives in the service to Christ, often with little if any fanfare. I see names of some who are elderly and some who are widows and widowers whose income is fixed and I wonder what they did without to furnish that leaf. I see names of younger people who have growing families and simply shake my head in awe of their dedication and thank God for their trust in this ministry. I see the names of some saints of God who know that they have more days behind them than they have before them and feel so humbled that they would sacrificially place a leaf on the tree. I see names that have been placed in honor or memory of dear ones and think how fitting that memorial is.

I hope that each of you will come by the new CRA Bream-Burrus Building and spend some time looking at the "Tree that Love Grew." Let us share some of the stories of the names on that tree with you. I guarantee it will be time well spent.

March 2003

## Correction and Clarification

The December issue of *The Restoration Herald* contained part of a news article that had been carried in the on-line issue of the *Baptist Standard*. The original article appeared on August 6, 2001. This news article was carried without comment so that our readers could see the position of one minister from an a capella Church of Christ who is often promoted as one who has achieved a stature of fame in the evangelical world. We often think, and have been taught, that those in the a capella churches have their doctrine straight. What is not said is that the brethren on the other side of the keyboard are going through the same things that we are and just because one is a "minister in the church of Christ (a capella)" does not mean that he is orthodox in his message. We did not print what he said to "agree with him" as one caller thought, but to show how far he has gone in his views.

Two brethren wrote to tell us that we didn't have the entire story of that news item. One was much kinder in his correction than the other. I appreciate both of their corrections. It seems that Max Lucado apologized after his interview came out. The correction was printed on his web-page and probably elsewhere. Since we printed part of his original interview, and he asks that his apology be shared with others, it is only fair that we print his apology now that we know about it.

August 14, 2001

Dear Friends, You are receiving this letter because of my appreciation for your friendship and heart. If I could impose upon that friendship, I need to ask for your help.

A recent article in the *Baptist Standard* could easily leave the impression that I am ungrateful for my relationship with and heritage in the Churches of Christ. Here is a paragraph from that interview.

*"I don't consider myself a revolutionary; I'm not trying to wake everyone up. But a lot of them have written me off; . . . But I really don't consider myself a Church of Christ minister. I consider myself a minister at Oak Hills, which happens to still call themselves a Church of Christ. But if I should leave Oak Hills, I couldn't see myself going to another Church of Christ. I would go anywhere the Lord sends me. I think I would make a good Baptist."*

I was deeply troubled as I read those words. They were careless, insensitive and disrespectful. And, most of all, they really don't reflect my heart. My affection for the Churches of Christ runs deep.

Then how can I explain the words in the article? As I've reflected on them, two answers come to mind. My frame of mind on the afternoon of the interview wasn't Christlike. Some recent frustrations tainted my attitude and made their way into my responses. Again, I was careless.

And what about the phrase, "I would never serve in another Church of Christ"? What's missing on paper is the tone of voice and personality of this part of conversation. The truth of the matter is that the sentence was an attempt at levity. A lame attempt. Something more in the manner of: "It's not that I wouldn't serve at another Church of Christ, but more that another Church of Christ probably wouldn't want me."

This does not come across in the article. Regretfully, arrogance and aloofness does. For that I am deeply sorry. I can't "unsay" the words, but I can apologize for them. Please forgive me.

Feel free to share this note with whomever you might think appropriate. Your brother,

Max Lucado

It should be noted that his apology deals more with his comments about "serving in another church of Christ" than it does with his view on baptism. Nowhere in the apology does he say that he would not make a good Baptist or that there is a difference between the view that he holds concerning baptism and the view that Baptists hold.

In *Concerning the Disciples* (p.72) by P.H. Welshimer (Standard Publishing Co. 1935), Welshimer tells of the points of disagreement that Christians had with the Baptists in the chapter titled, "Withdrawal from the Baptist Church." He says, "They disagreed upon the *design of baptism*. The New Testament teaches that baptism is connected with the remission of sins. Obedience in baptism brings about the change of state, and with it the forgiveness of sins. The Baptists taught that baptism was to be administered because sins had already been remitted."

There is a difference in views on baptism even today between Christians and Baptists no matter what Mr. Lucado or certain of our Bible college professors may say.

For those who think that Mr. Lucado's view on baptism was misinterpreted, or misrepresented, here is a paragraph from a study on baptism that was based on a sermon preached by Mr. Lucado and currently on the web-site of the Oak Hills church of Christ ([www.oakhillschurchofchrist.org](http://www.oakhillschurchofchrist.org)) under baptism. The title is "Baptism: The Demonstration of Devotion...the Purpose of A Teaching Position." This document says that, "A teaching position serves to articulate the convictions of the Oak Hills leadership on a particular doctrine of practice. This paper on the topic of baptism is useful for..." And then under the number 2 it says,

**"2. Those who have been baptized, but not by immersion.** We have many potential members who were baptized by sprinkling, usually as infants. This paper will help you see why we baptize by immersion. It also explains why we don't baptize infants. We urge you to read the paper and consider adult baptism. *If you choose not to be immersed at this time, we still welcome you as a member...."*

There is no doubt that Mr. Lucado is a very talented, popular, and skillful writer. But I would like to hear a clearer sound from his trumpet so I can tell which way he is going and instructing others to go. Paul's words ring true here even though they deal with another subject:

*"Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the flute or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying?"* I Corinthians 14:7-9a (NIV).

Why is this important? This coming summer one of the featured speakers at the NACC in Indianapolis will be Max Lucado. He will be introduced as a faithful preacher in the a capella Church of Christ. Our people need to know that Mr. Lucado may be a Trojan horse brought in with the impression that all is well in Zion.

Another speaker, David R. Reagan, who says he has Restoration Movement roots, will be leading a Bible study at the NACC. Reagan is a popular speaker in many of our larger churches. It is not his hyper-Pre-millennial view that troubles me nearly as much as his view on salvation. We have had pre-millennial speakers before. I remember in Anaheim in 1974, Floyd Clark spoke three times on Bible prophecy, taking a pre-mil approach, and then was castigated from the NACC platform by Myron Taylor for his pre-mil teaching. So pre-mil has been done before, but now comes another Trojan horse named David R. Reagan who will be introduced to the NACC crowd with the information that "his ordination as a Christian minister has been formally recognized by three different Christian groups."

But where does he stand on salvation? In his book, *"The Master Plan,"* Mr Reagan says on page 219, "I appeal to you to reach out in faith to Him (Hebrews 11:6). Humble yourself before Him (2 Peter 5:6-7). Confess your sins (Romans 10:9). Ask Him to forgive and save you (Acts 2:21). Receive His Son, Jesus, as your Lord and Savior (John 14:6). And then seek out a fellowship of believers where you can begin to grow in the Lord (Hebrews 10:25)."

Notice that nothing is said about baptism (Acts 2:38, Galatians 3:27, Acts 22:16, 1 Peter 3:21). And how does one get that we are to "confess our sins" from Romans 10:9?

Lest someone think we may be misrepresenting Mr. Reagan, his book for children, *"Jesus is Coming Again,"* says on page 27, "What must a person do to be saved? – Acts 16:31. If your child desires at this point to receive Jesus as Savior, then lead him or her in this prayer; 'Dear Heavenly Father, I believe Your Son, Jesus died for my sins. I am sorry for my sins. Please forgive me of them. I want to receive Your Son as my Savior from sin, and I want to become a member of Your family. Please send Jesus to live in my heart today. In Jesus' name, Amen'."

How far we have come from the original purpose of the NACC and the spirit of those who started this convention. These men will speak. These men will be graciously introduced. These men will have book tables where their books will be available to all. Nothing will be said about their errant views on salvation. And another step will have been taken away from the original intent of the NACC, but more importantly, another step will have been taken away from New Testament Christianity. How sad!

I know there is a preacher shortage, but surely there are some men among us who can bring a faithful word to the gathering without compromising. Can't we hear those men instead of the two mentioned?

**Mini-Messages**....Recycled Riches is one of the most exciting programs in our brotherhood. It is a program where churches and/or individuals place money in a fund so that churches can borrow the money interest free. As of this month, the total amount

of Recycled Riches loans that have been made equals twice the amount of money that has been placed in the fund. Amount given to the fund: \$558,489. Amount loaned out from this fund: \$1,128,150. If you are looking for a way that your money can keep working for the Lord after you are gone, think about Recycled Riches loan. Call the CRA for more details....Jack Cottrell's latest book, *"The Faith Once for All,"* is advertised on page 19. If you can only buy one book this year, this should be the one. If you are looking for a gift for your preacher or teacher, buy this book. If you know of any Bible college students, buy them this book. I cannot personally say too much about this book. Dr. Cottrell has done everyone a service in writing this. You will do yourself and others a service by getting a copy of it. 33 wonderful chapters covering doctrines in the Bible. Get a copy right away....Are you looking for a speaker for a special program, banquet, or special emphasis? Contact Dr. Jesse Carter Henderson at 34 Elm St., Butler, KY, 41006. I don't usually make this kind of recommendation, but I have known Jesse for about 40 years and know him to be talented and well-versed in the scriptures. His phone: 859-472-6591....Take a good look at the Calendar of Events on the back page. You might want to plan your vacation around some of the great family camps that meet each summer. They are usually inspiring and educational....Pray for your elders. LM

April 2003

## Ask those Questions

Close to 50 years ago, my home congregation sent a survey to all of the missionaries supported by the independent Christian churches/Churches of Christ. Two things should be noted: (1.) We didn't have a whole lot of missionaries in those days, and (2.) This church was one of the top giving churches to missions in the brotherhood.

One well-known missionary took offense at some of the questions ("In whose name is the mission property?" etc.) and wrote a blistering letter that in essence said that it was none of the church's business. He was answered with a reply that said, "As long as you are asking for support, it is our business."

That answer was more than correct. The giver not only has the right to ask questions, but also the responsibility to ask questions. This is true not just in missions, but in the local church and any charity that seeks your funding.

You have the responsibility to ask questions and you have the right to get correct answers. Those who dance around clear questions trying to rephrase them so they can answer them in their own way should be avoided.

Years ago in one of our Bible colleges the charge had gone out that they were not producing preachers. They hired a new president who was supposed to put things in order. He immediately began approaching the constituency with the story that under his regime the school would produce "ministers." Most people thought he was talking about preachers. The fact was that he knew what he was doing. If they thought "preachers" when he said "ministers," that was o.k. with him as long as the money continued to come in. The last time those figures were available, that college had less than 8% of its graduates entering the preaching ministry.

A publication recently carried an article in which the academic dean of a college said that the question, "How many preachers did your college graduate last year?" is a question that "sounds reasonable...but it may have more to do with an idealized past than the present reality." He goes on to say that the "question denies a biblical truth that the Restoration Movement has held especially dear." The biblical truth that he refers to is, as he says, "Few ideas are more obvious in the New Testament than the call to every one of God's people to serve in the name of Christ." In other words he is saying that to ask the question about preachers coming from a Bible college is wrong because "the Scriptures repeatedly stress that the work of service– the work of ministry– is every Christian's work."

Of course we believe in the priesthood of all believers. Ephesians 4:11-12 says, "*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,...*" (NKJV).

We also believe that it is the responsibility of the local church, elders and evangelists, to equip the saints. However, churches have banded together to start and support Bible colleges and have given the task to the Bible college to help produce the preachers (evangelists) that will in turn "equip the saints for the work of the ministry." I'm not sure that churches have ever taken that task away from the Bible college. Colleges that change their mission to producing generic "ministers" rather than "preachers" usually change quietly from within without the supporting churches even noticing.

Woodrow Kroll, who has served as the president of a denominational Bible college and chairman of the Division of Religion at a denominational university, has written a book entitled, "The Vanishing Ministry in the 21st Century." In this book (a must read for any concerned with the issue) he has a chapter dealing with ministerial education. He begins by saying, "Because ministry education has slipped seriously from its original prominence...trustees, administrators, and faculty must ask some hard questions."

He then lists seven danger signs that a college must look for if it wants to maintain a "viable pastoral training program."

1. "A danger exists for ministry education when the institutional community at large and the board of control in particular demonstrate little understanding of or commitment to the institution's historical mission...."

2. "A danger exists for ministry education when diversification in curriculum and programs threatens the institution's distinctive mission...."

3. "A danger exists for ministry education when the definition of ministry becomes so broad that it includes any vocation pursued by a Christian...."

4. "A danger exists for ministry education when college presidents continually feature pastoral majors in financial appeals to their church constituency but business, education, or other majors have actually supplanted the pastoral major in institutional importance...."

5. "A danger exists for ministry education when the number of required Bible and ministry hours is reduced to accommodate other necessary curricular offerings...."

6. "A danger exists for ministry education when institutions view themselves simply as preparatory to higher forms of education and reconstitute their curricula accordingly...."

7. "A danger exists for ministry education when administrators are willing to budget high-ticket items to support general education courses but are not willing to budget a proportionately equitable amount to ministry training...."

Again, you have the responsibility to ask questions and you have the right to get correct answers. Take a long look at the danger signs that Kroll lists. See if any of those signs resemble your Bible college. If it does, ask questions!

May 2003

## This and That

\* Just North of the beautiful Ozark Christian College campus is a wooded hill. On that hill and in that woods are three other para-church ministries: Good News Productions, Christ In Youth, and Peace On Earth Ministries. While in Joplin, I had a privilege of staying in one of the Good News apartments that they have built for visiting missionaries. What a wonderful idea! I toured all three ministries and American Rehabilitation Ministries located a little over a mile north of the others. All of these ministries are doing a wonderful work. But what was most impressive is the fact that the over 20 para-church organizations headquartered in Joplin, MO, meet once a month for prayer and fellowship. The prayer time is conducted in the peaceful Don DeWalt prayer chapel. These ministries get together each month and pray for each other. What a wonderful example to us all. Visit all of them when you are in that part of our country.

\* The seminars at the CRA's Bream-Burrus Building, are meant to help almost everyone. In May we are having Jack Cottrell deliver a day long seminar on "Baptism: What Does the Bible Say, and Does It Matter?" We have many churches promoting baptism by saying that it is just a symbol of what has happened to the believer. If that is what our leaders/preachers believe, then how far have our congregations gone? Dr. Cottrell will bring fresh life to this important subject and equip each one for the future.

\* With this month's *Restoration Herald* we begin a series from the pen of the late R.C.Foster that has been taken from his book, "Studies in the Life of Christ." The subject matter deals with the two-source theory. This is a theory that the Gospel writers copied their material from a couple of early sources that do not (and never did) exist. At the conclusion of the series we will give the reasons as to why this chapter was reprinted here and at this time. It will be well worth your time to read the material.

\* When the CRA began in 1922, it was a time of turmoil in our churches. We had just come from the start of a century when it was trumpeted that we were the fastest growing religious group in America. It was a time when, caught up in that euphoria, many began to question what we believed and others sought to grab for all the power and prestige that they could. The original platform upon which the CRA sought to do its work, included a paragraph that indicates what was happening at that time. The paragraph said that the CRA stood for, "The abolition of monopoly in Christian service through a multiplicity of agencies." Some of today's leaders have forgotten the lessons of history and are moving in the other direction.

Just a few years ago we had about five or six lending institutions in our brotherhood. Today we are down to two, I believe. The largest is the one which has become one of the main sponsors of the NACC. Now comes word that this same lending institution has created a "nationwide church planting ministry." Their material says that there are

"merger agreements in progress" with regional associations. As Yogi Berra would say, "It is *de ja vu* all over again."

\* We currently have readers all over the world. One never knows how far reaching the work of the *Restoration Herald* is. We do know that we currently go to over 44 countries of the world. Just recently we received word that *Current Thoughts and Trends* magazine, which combs hundreds of periodicals each month and then selects and prints a synopsis of some of the articles, had selected articles from the *RH* two months in a row. We are thankful that others, outside our movement, also find benefit in the pages of the *RH*.

The CRA's Symposiums are also getting attention in other arenas. We recently heard from the Princeton Theological Seminary Library requesting copies of the manuscripts of all three symposiums. We gladly sent them. Copies are available for others who would like to have them.

\* On our *Calendar of Events* (back page) we have many family camps listed for this summer. I'm sure that there are many more. We encourage you to attend as many of these as you can. You will hear good, solid, conservative Christianity proclaimed.

\* Page 18 carries a very disturbing article. The people who wrote the article are frustrated by events they see happening in the church they attend and churches around them. How do we answer these saints of God who have given their lives in service to Christ through His church? Should aging saints be ignored? Pampered? Listened to? These saints are a multitude in our congregations. Without these people most of our congregations would not exist today. Their voices deserve to be heard.

**Mini-messages**....In uncertain days it is great to know that we know Who it is who holds the future. Having that knowledge and assurance makes this an ideal time for evangelism. Speak up for Christ this very day....We are hoping to have DVD copies of some of our recent seminars. Watch for details next month.... "*Though many of us deployed service members are prepared for war, our true profession is peace.*" This sentence from an Air Force pilot in Saudi Arabia could also be the cry of every Christian as we face our non-Christian world. In fact, I think that may be what Jude is saying in vv. 3,4....Pray and work that all may truly know the Prince of Peace. LM