

“You’ve Come A Long Way Baby!” — So Have Churches [concluded]

by Bill Crews

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preeminently religious organizations committed to religious activities. But many of them have come a long way from that stance. Bible classes have become “Sunday Schools” that teach less and less Bible and engage in all manner of non-religious activities. Church worship services have become more and more fun and entertainment sessions, informal and boisterous. Sermons are not only much shorter; they contain little or no Bible and more and more of man’s wisdom and philosophy. “Houses of worship” have been replaced by “family life centers.” If churches still have “sanctuaries” for prayer and praise and preaching, their gymnasiums and recreational buildings are much larger. “*Fellowship*” is no longer communion with God, Christ and the Holy Spirit; it is rather eating, drinking, entertaining and playing. Churches build play grounds, ball parks, tennis courts, swimming pools, hot tubs, saunas, game rooms, kitchens and dining halls. They sponsor all kinds of ball teams and scout troops; they have summers camps and numerous trips and outings. They have vans and buses to carry people to all kinds of non-religious activities. They offer classes in fire prevention and safety, nutrition, dieting and exercise, sewing, quilting, cooking, art, pottery, first aid, investments, retirement planning, job training and job hunting, square dancing and other forms of dancing. They have baby sitting for “mothers’ day out,” day nurseries for working mothers, kindergartens, grade schools and colleges. The more they get into these things, the less religious and spiritual activities they have. The more they teach the things of men, the less they teach the things of God. The more they become involved in activities that pertain to this life alone, the less they concern themselves with saving souls from sin and preparing people for eternity. Yes, indeed, churches have come a long way but in the wrong direction. It has not been for the better; it has only served to move them farther and farther from God.

Dear reader, will you at least take your Bible and learn for yourself what churches were like in the first century? Read the book of Acts and then the epistles and learn what you can about the organization, worship and work of New Testament churches. Our plea is that we be Christians according to the New Testament and that we constitute churches that truly belong to Christ and follow the will of Christ.

“Masterpiece”?

by Wayne Goff

This past week we received an announcement from one of those progressive churches mentioned by Bill Crews in the previous article. They are located about 175 miles south of us, and advertise one speaker who is “the High School Ministry Coordinator at The Hills in Rochester, TX.” (I’m still looking for that title in my New Testament! Some brethren do not even pretend to speak where the Bible speaks anymore!)

But they also advertise “Performers”! One brother has a “ministry” of “creating Masterpieces on canvas.” Then they have a “group of OC students who travel throughout the world sharing the Gospel and spreading the word about Oklahoma Christian through their contemporary a cappella concerts.” Once again, I am looking in my Bible for anything that is a thirty-second cousin to such antics. Can you imagine the apostle Paul going out on a missionary journey with that program?

Paul said that Christ sent him “to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect” (1 Cor. 1:17).

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18). The Gospel is God’s power to save — not the gimmicks, antics, and shows of our liberal brethren, who have borrowed such things from the denominations. While I am sure they are well-intentioned, they are misled, misinformed and denominational in their concept of the Lord’s church and His soul-saving message!

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