



# Oologah Observer

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

**Church of Christ** • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

## TREADING THE WATERS OF INDEBTEDNESS

Chuck Northrop

In a country where the average person is literally thousands of dollars in debt, a person would hope to find some feeling the weight of indebtedness. At some point, many people, if not most, *have gotten in a little over our heads*. While treading the waters of indebtedness, some people have determined to do their best to get out — to pay their debts and to stay out of debt. Feeling a weight of indebtedness, Paul wrote to the church in Rome, “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise” (1:14). Obviously, Paul did not feel a monetary indebtedness, but nonetheless he felt an obligation — an obligation to preach the gospel. This is a debt that all Christians need to feel. ***Christians are treading the waters of indebtedness!*** It is not an obligation brought upon Christians because of what people did, but because of what God did through His infinite grace and mercy. Like Paul, Christians should feel indebted to all men no matter who they are, but why? Consider the following reasons:

### Because of Salvation

As Paul transformed from persecutor to preacher, he was grateful for the exceeding abundant grace of God which brought salvation unto all men (1 Timothy 1:13-15; Titus 2:11). Just as salvation was extended to Paul, God’s grace has been extended to Christians who have come to believe Jesus is the Christ, repented of their sins, and have been baptized in the name of Jesus. Such grace and mercy was extended not for the sole purpose of saving

us “for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Ephesians 2:8). Jesus “tasted death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9). Jesus was made “to be sin for us” (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus became poor in order for Christians through His poverty to become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). Do we have the same attitude of gratitude as did Paul? Do we feel compelled to preach and teach the gospel of Christ because of the salvation He has extended to us through His sacrifice? If we have received the blessings of salvation, we are brought under obligation to carry the same message of salvation to all men.

### Because of Command

Jesus charged Christians with a mission to go into “all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). With every command comes responsibilities and obligations. Christians have an obligation to fulfill the commands of the great commission. Christians of the first century understood their responsibility for they “went every where preaching the word” (Acts 8:4). By the time of the writing of Colossians, the gospel “was preached to every creature which is under heaven” (1:23). Since Christians should be Christ-like, then Christians have a Christ-like mission. Jesus said, “Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (John 20:21). Notice His mission: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). Also, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Timothy 1:15). Let us, therefore, consider the words of Paul to Timothy, “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (1 Timothy 4:16). Furthermore, since Christians are to aspire to godliness, then let us have the same desire as “God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:4). It is vitally important for Christians to understand our responsibility, yea, an obligation to fulfill the command of Christ to take the gospel into the world. Paul felt the obligation. Do you?

### Because of Stewardship

Christians have been entrusted with the precious gospel. It is part of our stewardship. We are the “earthen vessels,” and it is the “treasure” (2 Corinthians 4:7). In this last dispensation of time, if God’s will is revealed, it will be revealed by “earthen vessels.” Consider the various accounts of conversion in the book of Acts. The Holy Spirit was present on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, but the will of God was revealed by men, the apostles, to those who cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (2:37). Again, the Holy Spirit was present as Philip went into Samaria as recorded in Acts 8. However, the will of God was revealed through the man Philip, and the Samaritans “believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God” (8:12). In Acts 10 and 11, an angel spoke to Cornelius, but the angel did not reveal the gospel to him but instructed him to send for Peter, a man, “who shall tell

thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved” (11:14). Furthermore, Jesus revealed Himself to Saul of Tarsus, but Ananias, a man, instructed Saul to “arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (22:16). In Acts 16, Paul received a vision in the night of a man of Macedonia who said, “Come over into Macedonia, and help us.” Paul and his company went into the city of Philippi and preached the gospel. Obviously, the miraculous manifestations of God were in the vision, the casting out of the spirit of divination, and the opening of the prison. However, God’s will was not revealed in this way for “we have this treasure in earthen vessels.” Paul knew the obligation associated with the stewardship of the gospel for he wrote, “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Corinthians 4:1). Christians are stewards, and we have an obligation because God has entrusted us with a most serious responsibility. Will we be as the one talent-man who hid his treasure or as the five talent-man who gained five more? It is a matter of stewardship. Are we faithful and wise stewards or unjust stewards? One day, all stewards will have to give an account of their stewardship!

Brethren, we are debtors to God to take the gospel into all the world. Considering all of what God has done for us, do we feel we are treading the waters of indebtedness? If so, that is good! Now, proclaim His word, lift high His royal banner of truth, and take the gospel into the world!

## Just a Little

The members of the church on Sunday morning sleep a little late. They go straggling into the assembly a little late. Some of the members chew a little gum, joke a little, and doodle a little.

Brethren in the Bible class argue a little, figure a little, laugh a little. During the assembly, they listen to the sermon a little, commune a little and then give a little.

After dismissal, they gossip a little, go home and forget what little they heard, and act a little like they cared but little for the greatest, grandest, holiest, and most precious institution on earth.

I may have exaggerated a little but a very little, and I think in some things, I have omitted a little.

Brethren, will you think on this a little?

## Observations and Concerns

February 14, 2024

**Welcome Visitors!** It is our pleasure and honor to welcome you.

**Praise in Psalm:** “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker” (Psalm 95:6).

**Declaration of Appreciation:** Let us remember to give thanks for the works we are able to support and for all faithful works throughout the brotherhood.

The Wednesday evening adult Bible class will continue with the fifth video on **Personal Evangelism** by Rob Whitacre. The title of this lesson is *Let’s Apply the Model*.

The theme of this year’s lectureship is “**Conversions in Acts.**” The date is March 22–24. Please plan to attend and invite others. Flyers are available in the foyer.

**Darla Smith** has a new phone number and an updated address. Please see Chelley if you need them.

**Remember in Prayer:**

- ▶ **Marcella Dennis** is having many health issues and was in the hospital last week.
- ▶ We are thankful **Andy Hudson** was able to be back with us this past Sunday.
- ▶ **Pat Taylor** is scheduled to have surgery on her carotid artery February 23 at Hillcrest in Tulsa.
- ▶ **Margie Casebolt**, mother Jody Northrop, fell and is struggling to recover. She has had x-rays and a CT scan that came back clear.
- ▶ **Pat Gray**, sister-in-law of Nelda and Sammy, is recovering from a heart attack.
- ▶ **Rosemary**, friend of Pat Taylor, has been diagnosed with thyroid cancer.

**Note of Interest:** The next Lord’s Day will mark the twentieth anniversary of this congregation being in the present building. This congregation was planted in late August, 1978 and met in various places until Wednesday, February 18, 2004 when the Oologah church met in this building for the first time. We can all be thankful for the foresight of the brethren at that time for us in the present time to have a comfortable building in which to assemble.

Schedule of Services	Assignments		
	Wednesday, Feb. 14	Sunday, Feb. 18 AM	Sunday, Feb. 18 PM
Sundays			
Bible Classes . . . . . 9:30 AM	Chuck Northrop	Chris Nelson	Bill Dilks
Worship . . . . . 10:30 AM	Chuck Northrop	Chris Nelson	Bill Dilks
Worship . . . . . 5:00 PM (except 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday – 2 PM)	Bill Dilks	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen
Lord’s Supper (speaker)		Ross Swearingen	Chris Nelson
Lord’s Supper		Chris Nelson	
Lesson	Chris Nelson	Bill Dilks	Chuck Northrop
Prayer	Doyle Jackson	Chuck Northrop	Doyle Jackson
Door Attendant	Ross Swearingen	Chuck Northrop	Doyle Jackson