

– Continued from page 1 –

because the apostle Paul and others were invited to speak when they attended. *“Paul and his party... came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, ‘Men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on’”* (Acts 13:13-15). Evidently, the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch was not unique inasmuch as, all over the world, Paul preached the gospel of Jesus Christ in Jewish synagogues (13:5; 14:1; 17:10, 17; 18:4, 19; 19:8) or women’s prayer meetings (16:13). Indeed, doing so was the apostle’s *“custom”* (17:1-3). This custom of his would not have met with the success it did if the rulers of so many synagogues were not inviting him and those with him to *“say on”*.

The earliest churches held a similar disposition toward visiting speakers. When the church in Jerusalem learned that souls were being won to Christ in Syrian Antioch, they dispatched Barnabas and he was permitted to *“encourage them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord”* (11:19-23). The church in Antioch had not invited Barnabas, assigned him topics, or advertised his coming, but when he arrived, he encouraged them.

Paul planted many churches across several countries and is observed visiting them often, where he would be expected to speak (14:21-23; 16:1-5). Whenever he returned to Antioch of Syria, he could count on an opportunity to address the brethren (14:26-28) since that was the church that had sent him in the first place (13:1-3). If a preacher established a congregation or receives support from one, he generally has a tacit invitation to exhort the group whenever his travels bring him through. Yet, these were not the only churches he could visit and, without prior arrangements indicated, be granted an opportunity to preach. Paul had stopped in Troas once (16:8), but the only event recorded there is that he received the Macedonian call and immediately left for Philippi (16:9-11). There is no indication whatsoever he was the one who established the church in that locale, but when briefly passing through on a later occasion (20:6), he filled the pulpit. *“Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight”* (20:7).

Churches of the twenty-first century should adhere to the pattern set by the churches of the first century by utilizing the skills of those

– Continued on page 3 –

– Continued from page 2 –

brethren who are traveling through and willing to be put to work.

None of the foregoing is meant to suggest churches should be indiscriminate about whom they put to work. Clearly, it is the *“body”* which must *“edify itself”* through the work of evangelists, pastors, teachers, and others (Ephesians 4:11-16). And the body consists of those who have been baptized into it (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:13). Not only that, but the content of the message must be sound. *“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds”* (2<sup>nd</sup> John 9-11). Both the doctrine and its presenter must be rejected if it is false.

When a traveler who is unknown to the congregation offers to preach, he does need to be vetted. There are two ways to accomplish this. An individual member can vouch for him to the whole church, as Barnabas did for Saul when he first arrived in Jerusalem after he was saved. *“When Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out”* (Acts 9:26-28). This is the swiftest, most effective means of determining whether a church can put a man to work. Similarly, but less immediate, the traveler may present a letter of reference, as the Ephesians provided the Corinthians on behalf of Apollos. *“When he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace”* (18:27). If the church providing the reference is known to be digressive, then the traveling preacher’s offer ought to be declined, and if the reference comes from a congregation simply unknown to the brethren, then it is necessary for the brethren to directly inquire of the visitor regarding relevant issues before utilizing him in the assembly.

Unless the church has reason to decline, a traveling brother’s offer to exhort them should be gladly accepted. Hearing old truth presented in a different voice can expand comprehension. Edifying the local preacher is needful. Increasing the experience of the traveling preacher encourages him.

**"WHAT MUST I DO  
TO BE SAVED?"**

**ACTS 16:30**

**LEARN THE GOSPEL**

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

**BELIEVE IN CHRIST**

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

**CONFESS CHRIST**

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 3:19; 17:30

**BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST**

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF  
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

**HEBREWS 10:24-25**

**SUNDAY**

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

**WEDNESDAY**

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard  
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.  
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN  
ANY TRESPASS...  
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

**GALATIANS 6:1**

**CONFESS TRESPASSES**

James 5:16; 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 8:22

**PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS**

Acts 8:22

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN"**

**PROVERBS 25:11**

"How come people that claim  
they're filled with the Holy Spirit  
don't know the Bible?"

– Spencer Blackwelder

**GIVE ME THE BIBLE**

KDNF 840AM

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

**"WHOLE COUNSEL"**

**ACTS 20:27**

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NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2025

**"IF YOU HAVE ANY WORD OF EXHORTATION  
FOR THE PEOPLE, SAY ON"**

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Today, the Rio Grande Valley church of Christ is blessed to receive two visiting speakers: Connor LaChappelle and Trevor Trokey. My nephew Connor and his fiancée Karissa were visiting family in Arizona and are on their way back to school in Colorado. Trevor, whom I had the privilege to mentor for a few years early in his ministry and who works with a church in South Dakota where my daughter and son-in-law are now members, along with his wife Justine and their children Evie, Rae, Thea, Clayton, and Mina are visiting friends here in Valencia County. Both men made themselves available to edify the church during their visit today and we are thankful to have them.

Whereas some congregations may only utilize visiting speakers by invitation of the church, well in advance, with assigned topics, and under heavy promotion, we ought to be glad to do that and to accept travelers who put themselves forward during incidental visits. Doing so fits scriptural precedent.

This was how it was done in the synagogues. Granted, the synagogues of the Jews were not equal to the churches of Christ; nonetheless, many, possibly most, of the earliest converts to the gospel were Jewish worshipers recruited from the synagogues, and that was only possible – Continued on page 2 –

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