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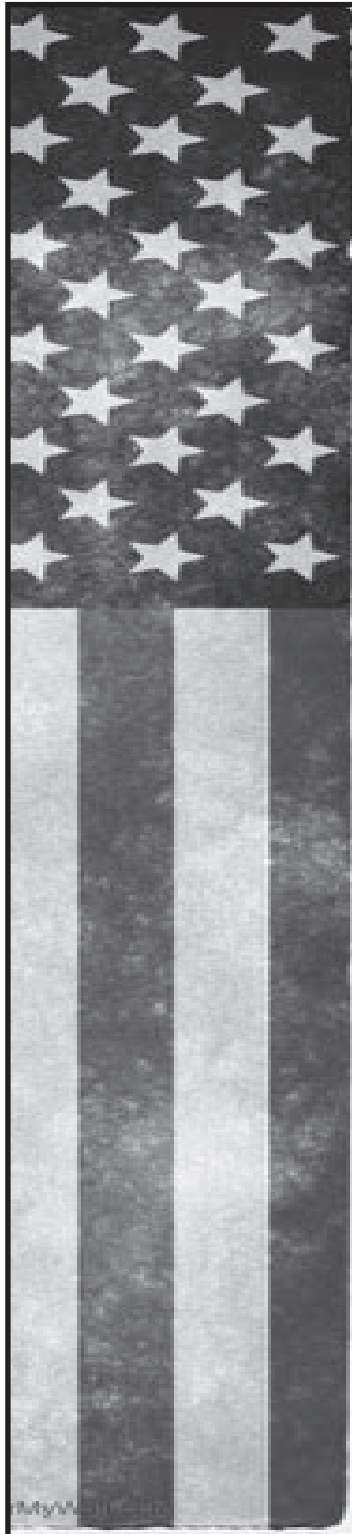
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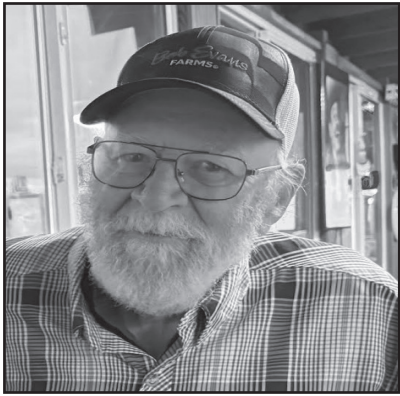
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— In Loving Memory —

Gary Lee Barnette, 77



Gary Lee Barnette, 77, of Lancing, Tennessee, went home to be with our Saviour, Sunday April 26, 2026, surrounded by loved ones, after a long battle with Alzheimer's.

Gary was a friend to everyone he met, always had a smile on his face, and could crack you up with his quick wit and infectious laugh. He loved his family very much and had a special love for his Grands and Great Grandkids. He was a member of Wartburg First Baptist

Church in Wartburg, TN, and traveled with Southern Gospel Music Group Eternal Heart for 25 years where he was known as Paw, Daddy, sound man, best friend, prayer warrior, bus driver, mechanic and biggest fan. He also taught Sunday School for many years at Calvary Baptist Church. Gary owned and operated Barnette Paint & Body Repair in Lancing for over 38 years. He had many loyal customers throughout all those years. He had a talent for making things look "brand new" again. Even though he was a diehard FORD man, he was also employed as the Body Shop Manager for Sexton Chevrolet in Harriman, Tn for nearly 10 years and Morgan County Road department for about 3 years.

Gary was preceded in death by the Love of his Life for over 58 years (wife) Judy Barnette, his

parents Lee W. II and Lucille Norman (Tx), his brother Mike Barnette (Tx), son-in-law Leon Kennedy (Deer Lodge), brother-in-law Roger Parker (Tx), sister-in-law Jeannie Parker (Ky), Mother-in-law Charlotte Corley (Tx) and Father-in-law Louis Parker (Tx).

He is survived by his brother Lee III (Wendy) Norman (Wartburg), brother-in-law John Parker (Ky), sister-in-law Sharon (Dennis) McCallister (Tx), sister-in-law Sheryl Parker (Tx), sister-in-law Linda Frederick (Tx), brother-in-law Mike Parker (Tx), Daughter - Tammy (Jimmy) Giles of Oliver Springs, Son- Roy (Heather) Barnette of Wartburg, Daughter- Shelley Kennedy of Lancing. Grandchildren who knew him as "Paw", Maci Giles, (Dylan Henderson), Eli Giles, (Taylor Milen), Haley Barnette, Hannah Barnette, Noah (Raelee) Barnette,

Christian (Kayla) Redmon, and Lily Kennedy. Great Grandchildren Kolter, Hudson, Grayson, Brynlee, Lex, Salem, Lennox, Capri, Lucy, Teagan and Oaklynn.

The family will receive friends Saturday May 2, 2026 from 12-2pm at Schubert's Funeral Home in Wartburg, Tn. The funeral will follow at 2pm with Bro. Brandon Peters and Bro. Matt Ward Officiating. Interment will immediately follow at Clear Creek Cemetery in Lancing, Tn.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Gary Barnette.

Vernon Ray Hawn, 74

United States Army Veteran, Vietnam War Veteran



Vernon Ray Hawn, a devoted son, brother, decorated veteran, father, husband, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend, passed away peacefully at his home on April 22, 2026, surrounded by the family he loved so dearly. He was 74 years old.

Vernon's life was defined by a profound love for God, his family and his country. A proud veteran, he served with honor

in the 101st Airborne Division during the Vietnam War. His bravery and commitment to his fellow soldiers were hallmarks of his character that he carried with him throughout his life. Whether in uniform or at home, Vernon was known for his steadfast spirit and his unwavering faith.

Vernon was a pillar of strength for his large and loving family. While his presence will be deeply missed, his legacy lives on through those he leaves behind. He is preceded in death by his daughter, Dominique Hawn; his parents, Oscar and Octavia Hawn; his brother, Doyle Hawn; and his sister, Vanessa Hawn.

He is survived by his wife, Susie Hawn; his children, Curtis Hawn (Dawn), Cole Hawn Sheperd (Tasha), and Kyra Hawn (Qua-

terrio). He also leaves behind his sisters, Cheryl Joyner and Michelle McCormick (John); his grandchildren, Erika Vibbert (Isaiah), Tierra Markley (Adam), Andres Rogers aka AJ, and Unique Sheperd; and his great-grandchildren, Tatum Markley and Eleanor Vibbert. Additionally, he is survived by many beloved nieces and nephews, and Margie Hawn Malicoat, a friend of 55 years, who was once his wife, who is the mother of his 2 oldest children, remained active in his life, remained faithful to their friendship, and helped tremendously during his illness, whom all will cherish his memory.

The family will receive friends and loved ones to celebrate Vernon's life and honor his service

at the Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg on Friday, May 1st from 5pm to 7pm, officiated by Brother Doug Morgan. A graveside service will be held on Saturday, May 2nd at 11am at the Mossy Grove Baptist Church Cemetery, where Vernon will be laid to rest with military honors.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." - 2 Timothy 4:7

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Vernon Ray Hawn.



— In Loving Memory —

Florence E. Potter, 97



mel and Clyde Potter, Summer Williams, Cheyenne Williams, Robby Williams, Dillon Williams, Maddie and Nick Duncan, Gracie and Reed, Riley Parton. She is also survived by her great great grandchildren Kathy Haney, Axton Williams, Wrenley Williams, James Duncan, Oakley Williams, Beckett Reed, Brynlee, Reece, Nevaeh Brady; step grandchildren Austin and Corey Keathley, T.J. Hall and Autum, Jonathan Curl and Victoria, Amber, Greyson and Lydia Schlatter.

Florence E. Potter, age 97, a loving mother, and grandmother passed away April 21, 2026 at her home after a short illness.

She is preceded in death by her husband Lester Potter.

She is survived by her son Martin Potter and daughter Elizabeth Williams; grandchildren Shawn Hummel, Vanessa Potter and Brandon Potter, Robert and Bridgett Williams, Tony and Stephanie Williams and Patrick Haney, Jay and Bobbie Williams, and Nikki Williams, and David Parton; great grandchildren Danica and David, Potter Seth, Noah and Nathan Hum-

The family will receive friends Saturday at Schubert Funeral Home from 2:00-4:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 4:00 p.m. with Bro. Mitch Hawn officiating. Interment will follow in the Old Potter Chapel Cemetery in Lancing.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Florence E. Potter.

Lydia Allene Lawler Garrett



She dearly loved her husband Wayne Garrett, her (6) kids, Damon Soles (Ariel Soles), Rickey Soles, Michael Lawler (Maria Lawler), Jason Lawler, Chris Garett, and Dana Duvall, her (13) grandkids; Kendra Soles, Damon Soles, Jr., Kurtis Soles, Callie Soles, Addilee Lowrance, Luke Soles, Austin Wise, Carlie Willis, Nicolas McDowell, Dominic Lawler, Daniel Lawler, Andrew Garrett, and Ashley Garrett, her (4) Great Grandkids: Carter, Elo-die, Kilian and Kaysin.

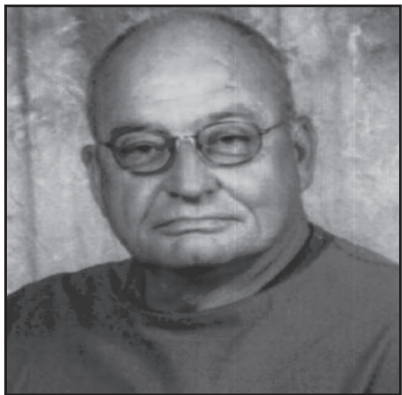
Mrs. Lydia Allene Lawler Garrett, born July 14, 1961, in Phoenix, AZ. She was a loving daughter to her parents, Dewey and Alice Lawler. She was a loving caring wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother. She loved singing, cooking, being outdoors, and absolutely loved her fur babies. Her favorite season of all is fall, but what she loved most of all in the whole world was her family and getting them all together to make sweet memories. She would always bring a smile to everyone's face.

She was a loving Daughter-in-law to Mildred and Freddie Garrett, a loving sister to her (5) siblings, Susan, Mark, Lee, Michelle, and Eric. She was a family woman who put God and her family first above all. She passed away peacefully in her home on April 11, 2026, surrounded by her family. She will forever be loved and in our hearts.

She was the best wife, mom, and mawmaw in the world.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Lydia Allene Lawler Garrett.

Garry R. Seabolt, 76



Garry leaves behind son, Garry "Joe" Seabolt; daughter Lora Parris; grandchildren Kelsey Gage Seabolt, Larry Kenneth Parris, Jr., Amanda Lynn Parris, Amelia Rochelle Parris; great grandchildren Maverick Parris and Mason Crady; special cousin and friend Roy Freels and a host of extended family and friends.

Garry R. Seabolt, age 76 of Sunbright passed away April 9, 2026 at Methodist Medical Center of Oak Ridge.

Garry was known for working on and driving motor freight trucks. He could sit for hours talking about trucks.

He is preceded in death by his parents Ralph and Verd-ie Seabolt; infant son Jarrod Seabolt; wife Betty Ward Seabolt; great granddaughter Dakota Grace Crady and son-in-law Larry Parris.

The family will receive friends Monday, April 13, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 12:00-2:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 2:00 p.m. with Bro. Terry Potter officiating. Interment will follow in the Sun-bright Cemetery in Sunbright.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Garry R. Seabolt.

Psalm 86:4-5

4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.



— In Loving Memory —

Marvine Cox Rainey, 97



Marvine passed away peacefully after 4 years of Alzheimer's.

A special thank you to Alexander Guest House staff and UT Hospice care givers.

In lieu of flowers contributions can go to Wounded Warriors Project.

Marvine Cox Rainey, age 97, of Oliver Springs passed away April 25, 2026 at the Alexander House in Oak Ridge.

She is preceded in death by her parents William M. Cox and Ellen (York) Cox; sister Ruby Smith, brother Charles Cox, brother Harvey Lee Cox, sister Maxine (Cox) Harris; nieces Margaret Ann (Harris) Wallis and Donna (Smith) Hester; nephews Don Cox, Infant Charles Cox, Bobbie Lee Harris, and husband Louis Rainey.

She is survived by niece and care giver LuVena (Harris) Ware, Pat (Cox) Davey, Gene Hester, LeAnn (Jeremy) Griffin, Amy Hester, and Jace.

The family will receive friends Thursday, April 30, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 3:00-5:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow with Bro. Roy Langley officiating. Interment will follow in the Petros (COG) Cemetery in Petros.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Marvine Cox Rainey.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Marvine Cox Rainey.

Clara Luanna "Snookie" Steelman Shearer



Special Aunt and Uncle Chester and Judy Huling. She has 2 grandsons, 1 granddaughter and a great granddaughter as well as a host of nieces, nephews and cousins who loved her very much.

Snookie was an avid basketball player and enjoyed her high school years at Sunbright. After high school she joined the United States Airforce where she met her husband, William Shearer. When their son was born in England she decided to leave the Airforce. After moving back to the states, she began a career in financial administration where she remained until retirement age. Snookie's last place of residence was Crossville, TN.

The family will receive friends Thursday, April 30, 2026 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. with the funeral at 7:00 p.m. with Bro. Mike Hammond officiating. Graveside services will Friday at 11:00 a.m. in the Lavender Cemetery in Deer Lodge.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Clara Luanna Steelman Shearer.

Clara Luanna "Snookie" Steelman Shearer born May 5, 1952 went to her heavenly home April 27, 2026.

Snookie is preceded in death by her great grandparents Lige and Leann Williams, Mindy Ann and Leo Ooten; grandparents Marvin and Edna Steelman, Clara Lee (Clint) and Floyd Coots, and parents Vance Claude "Pete" and Anna Kathleen "Katie" Steelman and brother Micheal Dwayne "Mickey" Steelman.

Snookie has two surviving children, Clayton Lee Shearer (Holly) and Chandra Leann Pate (Mark). Snookie is one of seven children: brother Rick (Rita) Steelman, sisters: Cheryl Bishop (Freddy) and Terri Ryon (Rick), younger twin brothers Tom Steelman and Tim Steelman (Trish) and sister-in-law Kathy Steelman.

Psalm 123:1

**Unto thee lift I up mine eyes,
O thou that dwellest in the heavens.**

J. Harold Johnson, 78



He is survived by his devoted wife, Wanda Johnson; his two children, Terri Johnson and Jeff (Kat) Johnson; and two precious grandchildren, Anson and Maverick Johnson.

The family will receive friends Tuesday April 28, 2026 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg with the funeral to follow at 1:00, Bro. Mike Jones officiating. The graveside service will immediately follow at Friends Chapel Community Church Cemetery in the Chestnut Ridge Community.

J. Harold Johnson died on April 25, 2026, in the early hours of the morning at Cumberland County Medical Center. He was born on June 29, 1947 to Clifford and Edna Johnson.

Harold was a kind man who would gladly give those he cared for the shirt right off of his back and was also a loving husband and father.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Clifford and Edna Johnson; and his brother, Ferrell Eugene Johnson.

"We love you, Daddy, and we'll miss you very much! Be happy and have fun riding those old cars you love so much down the streets of gold. Rest in Peace."

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of J. Harold Johnson.



Historically Speaking Local views of artificial intelligence: Regulation and education (part two)

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

Carolyn Krause provides a review of a unique Oak Ridge program discussing Artificial Intelligence. It may well be that Oak Ridge is one of the very few places where this discussion could be held and where four experts with credentials such as these could be found. I feel we often undersell ourselves and tend to overlook the very special aspects of being a Science City, a Secret City, an Atomic City, and do not give ourselves credit for being one of the only places in the world where scientific discoveries and dialog about special things take place routinely.

A panel discussion involving scientists and public policy experts who considered the potential benefits and harms of artificial intelligence (AI) was presented Feb. 10, 2026, at the Pollard Technology Conference Center of Oak Ridge Associated Universities. The AI panel kicked off the fourth season of "Our American Roots," which is produced by the Oak Ridge Breakfast Rotary Club and the Oak Ridge Institute for Continued Learning to help build bridges between cultures and communities.

The program, entitled "Railroads, Radio and Artificial Intelligence," initially tried to address two questions: "How do the challenges and opportunities of AI compare with those of the railroads and radio? What lessons can we learn from our knowledge about past disruptive technologies to help us prepare for the uses of AI and their consequences?"

Members of the panel were Stephen Streiffer, director of Oak Ridge National Laboratory; Lynne Parker, associate vice chancellor emerita at the University of Tennessee, former principal deputy director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and former founder of the AI Tennessee Initiative; William Lyons, professor emeritus at UT and associate director at the Institute of American Civics at the Howard Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs at UT, and Ashley Stowe, chief research and university partnerships officer at Oak Ridge Associated Universities.

The panel moderator was Alan Lowe, executive director of the American Museum of Science and Energy and the Atomic History Campus at K-25. He provided information about the history of American railroads and radio and asked the panel his questions and later questions from the audience.

After mentioning the Elimination of the Fairness Doctrine in 1987 in the history of radio, Lowe asked, "Should different uses of AI be regulated without hampering our ability to stay competitive with others in the world?"

Stephen Streiffer suggested that the dangers of AI cannot be underestimated. He implied that an AI-enabled robot could easily develop a nuclear weapon because of the availability of instructions on the internet on how to build one. AI might even be able to design a new disease. AI is the first technology, he said, that enables us to use our fingertips to access literally the entirety of human information that is on the internet.

"We know there are dangers and we don't know how to react," Streiffer said. "I think there's going to be an active period over the next few years where people will be going back and forth with what the right approach is. And we've got to get the right balance for the future of the



The AI Panel of William Lyons, Ashley Stowe, Alan Lowe, Lynne Parker, Stephen Streiffer, and Megan Millwood President and CEO of Oak Ridge Associated Universities (Courtesy of Ray Smith)

world."

Ashley Stowe said that one AI area the government may be regulating early is the use of electricity by power-hungry AI data centers. He noted that Elon Musk's 300-megawatt xAI data center (the Colossus supercomputer) in Memphis "has gotten tremendous pushback from neighbors," who are mostly Black residents. The facility is powered by unpermitted methane gas turbines. They emit pollutants that can cause respiratory diseases and cancer. To cool the computers, xAI draws excessive water from the source of the city's drinking water.

Streiffer said that companies like NVIDIA, Microsoft, Google, Amazon and the rest of the big-tech companies' ecosystem realize they should pay for the electricity they use for their data centers. "They are willing to do that so they can make money training their AI models," he added.

The AI data centers right now use about 4% of U.S. electricity, and over the next five years, they will probably consume about 10% of the nation's electricity, Streiffer noted. "For the first time in a couple of decades, the U.S. is seeing a general growth in electricity and energy demand overall. The problem is not AI, but it is AI that is hitting at a time when we already have an energy supply that's stretched." He said that one solution is to co-locate the electricity producers with the data centers. "It doesn't help if you have a lot of electricity in one part of the country when you actually need a lot more in a different part of the country," he added.

Lynne Parker offered a different perspective on the question about AI regulation.

"AI can be regulated as a technology, and that's what the European Union has attempted to do," she said. "They have put in place what's called the EU AI Act, which regulates AI writ large. And it has not been particularly well-received because it's trying to regulate all AI as a technology. That's an approach that the United States is not following.

"There is a lack of congressional regulation that works for all states. All 50 states are doing their own version of regulation so there are now thousands of bills across the country regulating AI. That means that companies that want to have an AI system that will operate in all 50 states will have to abide by 50 different sets

of regulations."

She said that the president signed an executive order recently that states that the White House will work closely with Congress to write one federal rule governing the uses of AI that will apply to all 50 states. Her conclusion: "I think there will be regulation, but I'm personally hopeful that it will be sector-specific so then you can look at particular tasks rather than AI as a whole."

Bill Lyons said that "another way to regulate AI is by lawsuit. You can't really regulate social media, but you can sure sue people for damages."

A prompt to Google Gemini in reference to Lyons' comment elicited this reply: "Yes, there have been several high-profile lawsuits involving AI chatbots and user suicides. These cases have sparked a major legal and ethical debate over whether AI companies can be held liable for 'wrongful death' when their technology is accused of encouraging self-harm or creating dangerous psychological dependencies."

Lowe's final question was about the best ways for teachers and students to use AI in education and the potential pitfalls. "How do you distinguish between those uses that are very positive and those uses that can have potentially negative impacts?"

Stowe said, "If you have a Microsoft product with Copilot built in, you use text, it can write the code, copy, paste, and you have the answer. But that doesn't remove our responsibility to think. And so, shifting the way that we educate to focus more on critical thinking, embracing technology and teaching how to use the tools in the classroom makes possible a Socratic method of learning involving a conversation between a teacher and a student."

Lyons commented on education several times during the discussion. He noted that businesses want to make tasks easier and employees more efficient. It is well-known that ChatGPT can help employees write better emails and reports faster. But in the enterprise of education, he said, the goals are to teach students how to think and communicate, "not to get an outcome as quickly as possible" such as an AI-drafted essay in an attempt by the student to complete an assignment in time.

- Continued on Page 8

Historically Speaking

Local views of artificial intelligence: Regulation and education (part two)

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

essay in an attempt by the student to complete an assignment in time. The challenge, he added, is to teach students how to use AI tools to aid them in critical thinking.

Stowe noted that AI can help teachers determine which students in a classroom have gaps in their learning and what the gaps are. The goal is to close individual students' learning gaps quickly, so they're not left behind in the class.

Stowe said that AI can be a private tutor but then asked the question, "How do I know if I can trust that private tutor?" His response was to "reach out to humans to test the information you're getting" and also "use more than one AI model," such as both ChatGPT and Google Gemini, "to gather information and compare outputs to test the accuracy of the information produced within different models. Use AI to validate AI."

"I'm a big advocate for teaching the teachers, particularly K-12 and maybe community college instructors to prepare our students for the AI jobs of the future," Lynne Parker said. "We need to be proactive and intentional and create programs and resources that can train teachers to be AI literate. We need examples of how AI can be used effectively in a classroom to help the teachers in their teaching, as well as students in their learning. Our children's futures depend on being able to use AI well."

Lyons said that the question of how AI can help in the teaching of humanities is unresolved. "The humanities especially are under threat at most universities," he noted. "People get frustrated over what value do they add. What the response in classrooms of my colleagues has been is to bring out the blue books and the



Lynne Parker presented "Introduction to AI in 5 Minutes" to start the panel discussion (Courtesy of Ray Smith)

pencils and hide all the technology.

"I think the humanities will be reconfigured to teach students to understand how humans operate, how they deal with others and how to react to them in a sensitive way. I think AI is going to empower teaching."

Lowe joined Lyons in defending the humanities. "A history major like me is the director of science museums," Lowe said. "We talk a lot at our museums about STEM and workforce development. But at the end of the day, we want well-rounded employees with soft skills." Lowe implied that education is more than "memorizing an aggregation of zillions of facts." A good education, he suggested, promotes an under-

standing of what is human, creativity and "what we might call wisdom."

Thank you, Carolyn, the AI Panel has amazing breadth of knowledge on AI, and you have captured it well. The third of the three-part series will continue the discussion by the panel and share even more AI insights.



1 Corinthians



Melvin Howard

(1 Corinthians 1:1-3) Salutation: Paul begins this letter by reminding them of his authority as an apostle, a necessary point in view of some of the stiff teaching to follow and because of a certain element within this church that questioned his apostolic authority. Sosthenes, who obviously was known by the Corinthian Christians, is probably to be identified with the “ruler of the synagogue” in Corinth (Acts 18:17), likely the successor of Crispus (Acts 18:8), who was himself persecuted and converted. It is not to be

concluded that he was a co-author of this epistle. The recipients are “the church of God” at Corinth, along with “all that call upon the name of the Lord...in every place” (v.2). The teaching of this document was not restricted to those first-century saints. It is equally binding on the modern Christian (miraculous elements excluded, of course). These had been “sanctified in Christ” at the time of their baptism (12:13; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27; Eph. 5:26). So are we today.

(1 Corinthians 1:4-9) A word of thanksgiving: the apostle is thankful for these Christians in spite of their many problems. They were benefactors of the “grace of God” in the salvation of their souls (Eph 2:8-9; 5:26; Acts 19:1-7), and had been divinely “enriched” in both “word” and “knowledge”--two qualities the Greeks highly prize, but of which their philosophers were bankrupt. They had received the “testimony of Christ” (about Jesus) which was “confirmed” in them. This most likely is a reference to the supernatural gifts that had been conferred by Paul’s hands (Chapters 12-14), which authenticated their teaching (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:2-4). These gifts would pass away with the completion of the New Testament canon (13:8-9).

They were not “behind” in the bestowal of these things, and they awaited the “revelation of Christ”---whenever that comes. Every generation is to anticipate it. The expression, “the end” (v. 8), does not refer to the end of time, but signifies “to reach the goal” (Jn. 13:1), the signs confirmed the integrity of the gospel so that these Christians could remain sound in the faith, not deserving of condemnation on the day of judgment.

(1 Cor. 1:10-17) Division over preferred preachers: Paul had received a report of “contentions” among these saints. Especially had they become infatuated with the ones who immersed them, and a spirit of rivalry had developed. The names Paul, Apollos, and Cephas are used to conceal the identity of the actual men who were bestowed undue prominence (perhaps with no fault of their own, see 4:6). There is no evidence that Cephas (Peter) had baptized anyone at Corinth. Paul rebukes this hero adulation on two bases: (a) Christ is not divided; Christians should not fragment themselves over men. How tragically this counsel has been violated over the centuries, Lutherans, Calvinists, etc. (b) “Paul was not crucified for you; thus, do not wear his name!” A negative implication from this premise is: “You cannot call yourselves after Christ, Christians, unless you were baptized into the name of Christ (for remission of sins).”

When Paul “thanked God” that he had baptized only a few, he was not deprecating the rite of baptism, suggesting it was not-essential for salvation (which would have invalidated his testimony regarding his own immersion, Acts 22:16); rather, it was to emphasize that he was conscientious not to produce pro-Paul cliques. He had immersed Crispus, Gaius (Acts 18:8; Rom. 16:23), and the household of Stephanas, but no one else he could recall. The Holy Spirit only refreshed apostolic minds in essential things (Jn. 14:26), not incidentals. The apostle was not “sent to baptize, to administer the act. It is important to recognize the context in which this statement was made. Other people could perform the act; his primary function was to preach the gospel (v. 17). Paul’s gospel (Rom. 2:16) was not presented with the rhetorical flourish and philosophical arrogance of the Greek system (2:1). It involved historical facts in plain language!

Paul preached Christ to Jews and Gentiles and all those who believed God’s word as delivered by the apostle were baptized (immersed in water) into Jesus for remission of their sins and continued in the apostles teaching (doctrine) one of which is to love our neighbor as self. No apostle ever taught sprinkling water and calling that baptism. No apostle ever taught a lost soul to quote a sinners prayer and claim salvation based on that.

To tell a lost soul to repeat your version of a sinner prayer is a working of Satan. If you believe that version of salvation your great faith is in a preacher, your faith is not in the word of God. You will not be judged by your preacher. You will be judged by the living words of God.

The Ephesians were saved by God’s grace through faith in the words of the gospel when Paul preached to them in Acts 19:1-7 when they were immersed by the authority of Jesus, by the hands of Paul or his traveling companions.

America does not have a political problem, we have a lying preacher prob-

lem. He is lying because of ignorance and unbelief in the words of Jesus Christ. I should be afraid to tell you this truth. I am the more afraid of not telling you the truth. The people who claim Holy Spirit baptism today and claim to be doing miraculous things are the ones Jesus will proclaim these two verses to at the Judgment. Matthew 7:22-23 “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

(1 Corinthians 1:18-25) The gospel versus human wisdom: the Greeks prided themselves on their wisdom. Real wisdom, however, is in the “word of the cross,” the message of the crucified and resurrected Christ. To the “intellectually elite,” the gospel was foolishness; to those “being saved” (a process, not a one-time act) it was the “power of God” (Rom. 1:16). The so-called “wisdom of the wise” would come to a dead end (Isa. 29:14). The philosophers of the Greek world were fools compared to the revelation from God (v. 20). Compare the modern philosopher who has no idea how the universe came into being---or of his own origin. Instead, he pontificates utterly ridiculous theories.

It was God’s pleasure to save lost humanity (those who will) through the so-called “foolishness” of the message of the cross, accessed only by those who believe it and surrender to its obligations (v. 21; Acts 18:8). The pride of the Greeks would not allow many of them to accept the simple message of a Savior who died for their sins. So remains the situation with many today. A crucified Messiah was a “stumbling block” to the Jews; such did not fit their perception of a conquering king who would overthrow Rome (Jn. 6:15). To those who truly were wise, however, and accepted the sacred “calling” (v. 24; 2 Thes. 2:14), Jesus Christ was the power and wisdom of God. With strong hyperbole Paul declared that the “foolishness” and “weakness” of god is so vastly superior to the “wisdom” and “strength” of men, there is no comparison! (v. 25).

(1 Cor. 1:26-31) The divine calling: the Christian commitment is biblically designated as a “calling.” Paul approaches this theme---first negatively, then positively. Those who congratulate themselves on being wise, mighty, and noble are not likely candidates for the gospel. They do not feel they need to learn anything. God’s plan of redemption, however, was to be accepted on its historical merit, not on superficial bases. No one is prepared to come to God while glorifying himself (v. 29). Jesus Christ is the manifestation of divine glory. One will glory in the Lord or glory not at all!

The divine “calling” (Eph. 4:1) is not a direct communication from God or his Holy Spirit, as some today allege. No one on earth knows anything about Jesus Christ and his way of redemption except what they have learned either directly or indirectly from the Scriptures. Here are some facts about the Christian’s calling: (a) Its source is God (Acts 2:39; Heb. 3:1). (b) It is characterized by a humble, willing-to-learn attitude (26-29). (c) The sacred calling is by means of the gospel (2 Thes. 2:14). (d) Its design is for a holy, worthy life (v. 2; Eph. 4:1). (e) Its direction is upward (Phil. 3:14). (f) Its sphere of operation is “in Christ” (Phil. 3:14). (g) The ultimate hope of the calling is in a single destine---heaven (Eph. 4:4; Col. 1:5).

It is not without significance that the Greek word that is normally rendered “church” in our English versions is *ekklesia*, a compound term meaning “to call” and “out from.” Such emphasizes the Christian’s separation from his past life of worldliness.

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