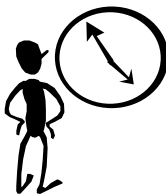


### Inside this issue:

<i>Aged Preachers - "Seeking an Answer"</i>	1
<i>Merciless Progressivism</i>	4
<i>Augustus H. F. Payne</i>	5
Duty Rosters	7
Announcements & For the Record	8



### Time of Assembly



#### Sunday:

Bible Study 4:00 p.m.  
Worship 5:00 p.m.

#### Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 p. m.

## Aged Preachers – "Seeking an Answer"

By Travis Main

Baptisms and burials, over a lifetime the preacher performed a great number of these. From Genesis to Revelation, his words carefully uttered the precepts of God. His hair was once full and his face youthfully smooth. Now the hair sports only grey and wrinkles outline his face. God called him through the gospel and the preacher answered. He knows spiritual peace as every day brings him closer to his Heavenly Father. Yet, the preacher seeks answers. How long will he be able to continue preaching? He feels strong now, but for how much longer? His wife believes in him, but she moves slower these days. How will he provide for her when he can no longer preach? Still, God watched over them all of these years and the preacher knows He will continue to do so. He grabs his Bible and begins a new day.

Is your aged preacher unsound? Is he unable to preach? If not, why would you dishonor him and disservice the Church by seeking a replacement?

*"Yea, even when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not, Until I have declared thy strength unto the next generation, Thy might to every one that is to come" (Psalm 71:18).*

"We need a young preacher who can relate to the teenagers!"

"I asked him a question the other day and it took him a long time to respond, I think his mind is going."

"We need a preacher who can go up and down the street knocking doors."

Words such as these pop up in congregations around the land. Regardless of motive, accuracy, or wisdom, they represent a body of believers who believe the aged preacher is lacking something. That perceived lack may cause them to

pursue the preacher's replacement. An alarming number of Sound gospel preachers have been abruptly dismissed from a congregation because they were "too old". Eventually, everyone ages. Does this make them worthless? Understand this, the only factors that matter when considering a preacher should be: Is this a sound man who can deliver a sound message?

*"The glory of young men is their strength, but the splendor of old men is their gray hair"* ([Proverbs 20:29](#)).

What does a sound, but aged preacher lack? He does indeed lack youth. A number of cultures prize youth above old age. A person's energy level certainly does change as they get older. Appearance transforms, hearing and eyesight dull, and the bone structure weakens. Response times cannot compare in most cases with younger people. A preacher may also lack modern vernacular. In other words, not only the terms or meanings have changed between the age of the preacher and the youth, but the topics of conversation are different as well. Most likely, the preacher also lacks knowledge of the latest gadgets. This particular preacher is one of them. iPad, iPhone, tablet, Kindles, Blue Ray ... no clue. I know aged preachers who cannot operate a basic computer, let alone consider the newest technology. It might be asked by some: "How can the old preacher possibly relate without this knowledge?" Yes, the aged preacher may indeed lack some things that others prize. The greatest question to be asked is: "How much does God prize the preacher despite what he lacks?"

It seems a fair examination to note things an aged preacher lacks that might concern some people. Logic also appeals to the need to examine what a sound, but aged preacher does not lack.

An aged preacher does not lack experience. A preacher sees the good and the bad over the years. Bickering members, doctrinal disputes, debates, firings, church discipline, church takeovers, church splits, rebukes, adulteries, fornications, abused children, homosexuality, pedophilia, sermon interruptions, members storming out, weak elderships, overbearing elderships, elderships asked to step down, false teachers, addictions to drugs, gambling, sex, pornography, ... the list of what a preacher has seen could go on and on. He has dealt with innumerable spiritual "catastrophes". An aged preacher should be thought of as a spiritual warrior ([Ephesians 6:10-18](#)). He fights battle after battle in service of his king. He should not become a forgotten hero. Understand sin does not change! Yes, it tries to take different forms, but a man who knows the Word, knows when transgression occurs. An aged preacher does not lack experience fighting spiritual battles.

An aged preacher does not lack wisdom, he fears God for he has spent his life coming to know him ([Proverbs 9:10](#)). The preacher studies the Word, the mind of God, and imparts it to others. As the years go by he becomes not simply an "old man", rather,

he is a sage. An aged preacher friend of mine noted this last year that his mentors have all died off. Now, the mentored had become the mentor. While a preacher may not be an elder, quite often elderships confide in him to avoid difficulties and strengthen weak areas of a congregation. Knowledge gathered and applied over forty to fifty years of preaching must be respected. It cannot be replaced by good hair and a Powerpoint projector. A man who has likely raised children and seen thousands of others raised knows something about youth that a twenty year old kid with a Bible degree does not. Christians need to take time to listen to their aged preacher. They need to reach out to them while slowing down in their lives enough to pay attention. Biblical understanding trumps the emotions of members often letting the world have too much pull in their lives.

Finally, an aged preacher does not lack leadership. Early on, the feelings of fatherhood develop in him as he shares the Word of God to the Church. He begins to view the Christians as his children more and more. This can even be seen in the words of the apostles as they write to the Christians, calling them "children" or "my child". They understand that as they appear before the congregation each week and interact in their daily lives, others will try to emulate them. Thus, they work to set a standard. They try to lead souls to Christ by living godly lives. Everyone desires to see their children grow. No less does the preacher with the Christians not only in his location, but in the others he visits or reaches through recordings or writings. Yes, the preacher rebukes at times. He warns. He chastens. He exhorts Christians to avoid all forms of evil. Unfortunately, some may just view him as an overly cautious worrier. This conclusion comes not from the scriptures, but from congregants viewing the preacher as an old man rather than a speaker of God's truths. That problem lies not within the preacher, but within the Christian. Christians would do wise to consider this leader of men ([Proverbs 23:22](#)).

Aged preachers do lack in some areas, but they more than make up for it in others. However, when considering an aged preacher, consider two items a congregation should not lack: honor and compassion. A congregation should behave in an honorable manner toward aged preachers. If a preacher can preach soundly don't you dare hinder him. If due to age, he is struggling, elders talk about how you can help. Perhaps he would appreciate doing a few things differently or would like to preach only part time. Work with this man who has given his life to God. Do not pull his life line or passion out from under him. Again, act honorably and treat him well. Even if he is no longer able to preach full time, find ways to engage him in shorter venues or upon special occasions. Compassion is something Jesus demonstrated throughout his earthly life. Compassion goes a great way when dealing with an aged preacher. We are to treat all of our brothers and sisters well. If a preacher reaches the point he steps down, do not forget him. Do not fail to care for him as he has cared for so many over the years. Do not give

him a chance to regret any service. Show him that his children loved him and learned from him.

A sound, aged preacher is worth more than gold. He may be lacking, but not as a Christian. He is experienced, wise, and a leader of generations. Have honor and compassion upon him. Pray that he finds the answer to his life of service as did Abram: "*But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.*" ([Genesis 15:15](#)) Give him peace by providing him opportunity to preach until the end. Give him peace by caring for him and his wife. Give him peace by knowing you heard the Word he shared and the Word he lived.

---

## Merciless Progressivism

By Matthew W. Bassford

The other day, I read a fascinating op-ed, "[The Cruelty of Call-Out Culture](#)" by David Brooks. It tells the story of a member of a punk-rock band who called out the band's lead singer for sending an unwelcome, explicit photograph to a woman, leading to his banishment from the punk-rock scene. A few years later, someone discovered that she had mocked a nude photo of another girl in high school. She, too, got called out and shunned.

As always, I am struck by the bizarrely puritanical turn that American progressivism has taken. Sure, progressives are generally very tolerant of many things that the Scripture describes as sinful. However, underneath that façade of tolerance lies an iron-bound code of conduct.

If it comes out that you've treated somebody in a way that progressives disapprove of, WHAM! The hammer will fall. All of your friends will reject you, and they will never again let you back into the circle of the elect. It's exactly the kind of behavior that Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote about in *The Scarlet Letter*.

Though it's hard for us to get our heads around the idea, progressives like this are very moral people. Even though they deny that there is any such thing as absolute right and wrong, they behave as though there is. They reject the authority of the Bible, but in their judgments of others, they appeal to the authority of progressive thought. They are more unbending in their insistence on their beliefs than the fieriest church dragon any of us have ever known.

However, for all their zeal, their ethical system has a serious, indeed fatal, flaw. It offers no hope for mercy or forgiveness. You get to feel all self-righteous when you denounce others, but when you slip up and somebody denounces you, it's all over. You will find no place for repentance, though you seek for it with tears.

Here, we encounter one of the great things that Christ has done for us. As Paul observes in [Romans 3:26](#), the blood of Jesus makes it possible for God to be both just

and our justifier. He can simultaneously insist on the righteousness of a perfect moral code and forgive those who don't live up to it. We see the seriousness of sin revealed in the crucifixion, but the power of the cross makes it possible for all of us to move beyond our sins. Without Christ, either God's law is unimportant, or our transgressions must haunt us forever. With Him, we can find grace through His self-sacrifice.

In other words, Christianity offers hope. Progressive philosophy doesn't. Progressives are either justified by works or not justified at all.

However, a church is (or at least ought to be) a community of people who have confessed their inability to justify themselves through their own righteousness. We've all messed up, so we are able to welcome and enfold somebody else who has messed up and wants another chance. We are merciful because we have received mercy.

Without that source of mercy, progressives are left with a grim choice. Either they deny the importance of the standards that they prize, or they reject all who violate those standards. Laws or people. You pick.

In Christ, we don't have to.

---

## Augustus H. F. Payne

By Earl Kimbrough

When the dark and angry clouds of war gathered over the nation in 1860, some pacifist gospel preachers in Missouri drew up a document pleading with their brethren to refuse to take up arms in the conflict. Entitled *Circular from Preachers in Missouri*, the paper was intended for brethren in all states. After the war began, the Federal government, in a move to thwart the numerous Southern sympathizers in Missouri from taking the state into the Confederacy, enforced an extremely harsh military rule on the civilian population. All public gatherings of any sort were forbidden. Preachers were not permitted to conduct religious services, including funerals and weddings. They could not even hold a communion in a private home. Some pacifist preachers suffered such severe reprisals that they left the state. Moses E. Lard parted for Kentucky and then to Canada. However, others remained and tried to uphold the truth.

One of the latter was Augustus H. F. Payne, a native of Mason County, Kentucky, where he was born April 4, 1807. In early life, he became a Baptist, being baptized by "Raccoon" John Smith, when Smith was a Baptist preacher. But by 1830, under the preaching of Barton W. Stone, Payne united with "the Christian church." In 1836, he and his family went in a wagon train to Liberty, in northwest Missouri. The following year, he began preaching the gospel in homes and barns of Clay, Platte, and Clinton Counties, "never with any assurance of financial support." He was associated with Moses E. Lard, Thomas M. Allen, Jacob Creath, Jr., and others in evangelizing Missouri before the war.

---

A man of great courage, Payne was not frightened into ceasing his ministry to his brethren and others by the presence and decrees of Federal forces. Kenneth L. Van Deusen, in his biography of Moses E. Lard, gives an account of Payne's activities during the war. "When most of the churches were ordered closed and ministers were warned not to conduct weddings, funerals, baptisms, Bible studies or communion services, Payne defied the edicts and continued as if such orders had never been given. With the church buildings locked and under government seal, he went from house to house riding his horse to preach, teach, edify, and comfort his brethren. He buried their dead, performed their marriages, baptized many converts and, to the best of his ability, courageously helped to keep their faith alive. More and more threats were made against him, but he would not be intimidated."

Van Deusen vividly describes the results of Payne's courageous efforts to "obey God rather than men." His modest cabin home was about three miles south of Plattsburg. One day as he was returning from a business trip to the town, a patrol of Federal soldiers commanded by "a Lieutenant Morton," terrorized his family by beating loudly on the door and demanding Payne's surrender. Payne's wife fearfully told the belligerent officer her husband was away, but would be returning soon. She sent her young son to find him and to tell him what had happened. The boy found his father visiting a neighbor. Instead of fleeing for safety; Payne went home at once and immediately was placed under military arrest. "He asked for the Lieutenant's orders to which the officer replied in a tone of sarcasm, 'I never show them. You must prepare to go with me.'"

Reassuring his family that he would see them again soon, Payne rode away with the military escort. "However, the courageous preacher was wrong, for he never saw them again. The patrol took Payne a short distance away to a briar thicket and there, without the least bit of mercy, shot him twice through the chest at point blank range, killing him instantly." Payne's family and neighbors may have heard the shots that took his life. They found his body and buried him in a corner of his property, since a public funeral was forbidden.

Thomas M. Allen told Alexander Campbell that he would "sooner go to the grave being killed for not killing my brother," than to go there "with my brother's blood on my hands." Whether Augustus Payne ever voiced such a sentiment is unknown, but it is evident from his cold-blooded murder that he would rather die serving the Lord than to go to his grave having neglected his duty. It takes more than manly courage to do what he did. It takes the moral goodness springing from that virtue, which is essential to the exercise of an unshakable faith in the Lordship of Christ.

Soon after Payne's death, Lard paid tribute to his fellow soldier in the Lord's army. "No man in Missouri stood higher or was more honored than this self-effacing pioneer, nor did ever a pioneer more richly merit the esteem in which he was held" (Kenneth L. Van Deusen, Moses Lard, That Prince of Preachers). After the war, Payne was reburied by his family and friends with an appropriate service in the Green Lawn Cemetery in Plattsburg, Missouri, where his body waits the glorious morning of the resurrection at the coming of Christ.