

and the fight is on. Our greatest victory is to bring our own being into subjection to the Lord's will. Satan is pleased when he sees a man who claims to be a Christian compromising between Truth and error. The Truth must stand and the error must fall. There can be no compromise if we are to please God (Gal. 1:10). Satan will fight as long as we stand for the Truth, but he relents and is pleased when we give in to those in error. Regardless of how much we may be attached to a man, we should remember that the Truth is greater than any human being.

—E.M. Borden
Deceased



The Northpoint Lighthouse

Volume 5, Number 51
December 20, 2009

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Let us pray for...

Rick & Sheila Beauchamp—his job hunt & mother, her recovery from surgery
April, Travis, and Titus Broking—illness that have kept them homebound
Sharon Harp—undergoing tests in Texas Presbyterian Hospital (room 3105)
Lavonne McClish—macular degeneration and other health problems
Janice Parks—her health and family burdens
Sandy Greene and Rick Heimberger—cancer

Faye Tarbet—recovery from major surgery

Welcome home...

Maggie Broking is home for two weeks from her basic training in Reserves

Records you helped make last week...

Bible Class	6
Sunday AM Worship	7
Sunday PM Worship	7
Wednesday PM Bible Class/Worship	8
Contribution—12/13/09	\$360.00
Contribution average (2009)	\$345.49

Sermon broadcasts...

Both sermons each Sunday are broadcast via Internet, available at our Website, www.northpointcoc.com. The Sunday morning sermon begins at approximately 10:47 a.m., and Sunday afternoon at approximately 1:15 p.m.

Bible class teacher for December Sundays **Dub McClish**
Chairman of Men's Meetings (October–December) **Darrell Broking**
Preacher, *The Lighthouse* editor **Dub McClish**

**Northpoint
Church of Christ**

5101 E. University Drive, Box 6
Denton, Texas 76208
940.323.2120

northpointcoc@hotmail.com
www.northpointcoc.com
www.scripturecache.com

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 1:00 PM

Wednesday

B.C./Worship 7:00 PM

XMAS EXTREMES

This is the time of year when most People are the happiest, friendliest, most hospitable, and most benevolent. I suppose the reason is what might be termed the “Christmas spirit.” What a wonderful world this would be if this spirit “ran loose” each day of the year, and indeed, this is what the Lord wills. Along with all of the good things this season brings, I have observed some who have extreme positions toward “Xmas.”

Not long ago I received a question concerning the defense of decorating a tree and giving gifts at this season of the year. This points up one of the extremes, namely, that it is wrong to practice such innocent customs as having a tree and buying gifts, exchanging cards, and such like. There are some religious groups that take this position and among individuals, I have known of brethren at various places who do, also. I think this is the answer to that extreme: if it is wrong to give gifts on December 25, it is wrong also on any other occasion. If it is not wrong on any other occasion (birthday, anniversary, etc.) then it is not wrong on December 25. There is nothing more wrong with decorating a tree with ornaments as merely seasonal custom than with raising a flag on Veterans’ Day or eating a turkey on Thanksgiving day.

Another extreme is represented by the often-heard cliché, “Put Christ back into Christmas.” Perhaps this sounds good to many, but the truth is that Christ never was **in** Christmas until man put him there. “In the 5th century the Western church [Roman Catholic, DM] ordered the feast to be celebrated on the day of the Mithraic rites of the birth of the sun and at the close of Saturnalia, as no certain knowledge of the day of Christ's birth existed” (*Encyclopedia Americana*, 6:622). This statement clearly points out the fact that God was not very concerned about His Son's birth's being celebrated.

The thing that God considered important for us to celebrate was His death, and we are thus to keep it in sacred commemoration each Lord's day. It is not by the **birth** of Christ that we are saved, but by His death and resurrection. Thus when we sing, “Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas Day,” we know not what we sing. God has made it impossible for us to attach any sacred significance to one day as the birthday of the Christ by withholding from both sacred and secular history the day on which He was born. For this reason churches of Christ have no special religious observances at this season of the

year or at any other time. The silence of the Scriptures forbids any such religious observance. A practice that began four centuries after Messianic and Apostolic times and gathered all of its ingredients from Pagan customs should indeed be looked upon with repugnance as a religious practice to those interested in New Testament Christianity.

One other extreme is especially noticed: Although I personally believe we are at liberty to exchange gifts at this or any other appropriate time, this can also be carried to extremes. We should not become enslaved by our freedom. Sometimes the contribution figure of the church sees a sharp decline at the close of the year. It may be because the prosperity of some has decreased, but it may also be because some went to the extreme with their gift-buying, decorating, and so forth. Some members of the church probably spend as much on gifts during this one season as they give to the Lord all year. We should never allow the Lord to suffer because we spent too much money on a wife, husband, child, or others. When such is done, we are in fact making Christ pay for our generosity. We should never allow such a seasonal custom to interfere with our giving, worship attendance, or other Christian duties. May we be delivered from these “Xmas extremes.”

—Dub McClish
Denton, TX



IS IT CORRECT TO SAY THAT NO TRANSLATION IS INSPIRED?

It is being said with ever-increasing frequency that inspiration is characteristic of the original autographs only and that it does not extend to the translations of Scriptures in use among us today. “No translation is inspired,” we are told. The conclusion which follows from this premise is quite obvious. Most people are without an inspired Bible today.

If the truth of the premise be granted, this conclusion irresistibly follows—fewer than one percent of the people in this country today have access to, or could read if they did, the original texts. The logic is unassailable. Only those who read the Bible in the original languages have access to an inspired text. More than 99% of the population today cannot read the Bible in the original languages. Therefore, more than 99% of the people are without an inspired Bible.

This conclusion we unhesitatingly reject. We reject it because the major premise on which it rests is wholly and utterly false. It is not true that most people are without access to an inspired Bible today. Moreover, it is grossly incorrect to assert that “No translation is inspired.” What is true, and what may properly be asserted, is that we have no inspired translators today. This is far—very far indeed—from saying that we are without inspired translations today.

The popular notion, “no translation is inspired,” results from a mistaken concept of (1) what inspiration is, (2) to what inspiration extends, and (3) how inspiration was achieved. *Inspiration*, noun form of the verb *inspire* (*in* + *spirare*, to breathe into), denotes the result of the Spirit’s infusion into the words, of sacred writ. Thus Paul affirmed, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God...” (2

Tim. 3:16). Similarly, he wrote to the Corinthians: “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth...” (1 Cor. 2:13).

From the foregoing it will appear to the observant reader that the “inbreathing” was into the text of Scripture rather than into the men who penned the Scripture, though they were, of course, under divine guidance in what they wrote, a fact we learn from 1 Peter 1:11–12, and often elsewhere in the Bible. Inspiration thus consisted of the “inbreathing” of Truth into the Word selected to bear the message. Inspiration actually resulted from the injection of Truth into the words they were prompted to write. Words, signs of ideas, thus became the vehicles to bear the ideas presented. Why were these words inspired? Because they were the vessels of the revelation of the Spirit, because they reflected exactly the “mind of the Spirit.” This they did perfectly since the words were selected by the Spirit for precisely this purpose. They may properly be said to be “inbreathed” (inspired) because they achieved the design of the Spirit in reflecting the Spirit’s message. This is verbal inspiration.

What difference would it make whether the words embodying the Spirit’s message were English, German, French, or some other modern language if, in any given instance, the word expressed as fully and as clearly the idea involved as did the original Greek word, since the inspiration consists in the full embodiment of the idea and not in the nationality of the word?

If the Word, in the second instance, reflects as accurately and as fully the meaning of the Spirit, why is not it as much inspired (inbreathed) as the former? It does, indeed; and there should be an end to the loose and thoughtless and obviously incorrect declaration so often heard these days that we are without inspired Scriptures today except as they exist in original manuscripts. This conclusion will not bear the test of either reason or revelation. Paul often quoted from the Septuagint (a translation of the Old Testament into Greek) and designated it as *Scripture* because the passages cited exactly represented the Truth of the original text though a translation of that text. Do those who so freely assert that no translation is inspired seriously believe that the Bible which Paul read from, and often quoted, along with Christ and other apostles, was uninspired?

The test of any translation is, “Does it reflect fully and accurately the mind of the Spirit as revealed through those chosen by the Lord to make known His will to man?” If yes, the words, whatever the language, embody the meaning of the Spirit and are as inspired as the original presentation.

We may, therefore, find much comfort in the fact that the scriptures, taken from a dependable text and accurately translated, are infallible, inerrant, all-sufficient, the full and complete revelation of God to man.

—Guy N. Woods
Deceased



BE NEITHER WEARY NOR COMPROMISING

Some, and perhaps all of us, need the exhortations, “Let us not be weary in well doing; for...we shall reap if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9), and “Let us go on unto perfection...” (Heb. 6:1). A crown of life awaits those who are faithful to the end