

Newsletter

WALDRON MISSIONS

Main Street Church of Christ

Vol. 43

December 2009

No. 12

THE BANGALORE DEBATE.

The debate with David Edwin Harrell on the questions of congregational co-operation in evangelism and the right of local churches to support homes for homeless children was held on the 19th of November in Bangalore. There were about 400 present and most (about 60 percent) had been brought in by the opposition as they have been promising support to many; although very few of them understood English. Unfortunately for them it did not go as they hoped.

Brother Mark Bass of the Alkire Road church, Grove City, Ohio will write a report of the debate for publication, so I will leave the particulars to him – see below. The debate was video taped and I hope to make that available by January 1st.

Besides Mark, two other American brothers were with me, Don Iverson of Banner Elk, NC and Russ DiGiorgio, who preaches for the church in Pennsylvania. It was very encouraging to have them with me. Don, with his artistic ability was especially effective in turning my slides into glorious illustrations for the power point projector. Not only was their presence an encouragement, but knowing that you were praying for me and for the truth to prevail was also a joyful thought.

As I told the debate audience these anti-orphans' homes people, who have invaded from America, would close every orphan home, which the churches of Christ are conducting in India, and there are a number. They would do the same in America for that matter.

It was pointed out that they are forbidding brethren for they forbid the bride of Christ to receive little children just as the apostles were forbidding the children to come to Jesus (Matt. 19:13-14).

Not only would they force the closing of all orphans' homes supported by the churches, but they would close every preacher training school. Note was made that they do not support Schools of Preaching, but hire brothers (whom we and others have trained) to fight the schools from which they graduated; as I noted, such are hirelings (See John 10:12).

Concerning orphans' homes I made the particular point that the home which Crossville helps to support near Coimbatore, through Don's efforts, would be shut down and every one of the children (119) sent away, if these "antis" had their way. (JW),

TRUTH PREVAILS IN BANGALORE, INDIA

Mark Bass

On the 19th of November, a public discussion between David Edwin Harrell of Ponte Vedra, Florida and Jim Waldron of Harriman, Tennessee was held in Bangalore, South India. Brother Waldron was assisted by Don Iverson, Russ DiGiorgio, and Mark Bass. Brother Bill Richardson of Birmingham, AL assisted brother Harrell. The debate consisted of two two-hour sessions beginning at 10:00 a.m. with a break for lunch. The rented hall was packed with well over 400 brethren from many parts of India. In spite of the differences all present conducted themselves as Christians should with the exception of one man and his helper.

This was Peter Solomon of the National Bible College in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, and his assistant, Volcano Philip, who made a spectacle of themselves openly seeking to disrupt the meeting with loud talking during the speeches; for which they had to be called down.

Not only so, but they openly showed their animosity toward the debate by passing out literature condemning it in the foyer and the meeting hall itself. Volcano Philip at one point even got on a cell phone and tried to persuade the local police to come to arrest the speakers, but they refused. Thanks to the foresight of those with brother Harrell six security men had been engaged to control any untoward incident, thus nothing severe came of the efforts of these false brethren. The propositions discussed were as follows:

1. The scriptures teach that in the matter of benevolence the church is limited to helping saints only.

Affirm: Ed Harrell. Deny: Jim Waldron

2. The scriptures teach that one congregation may send funds to another congregation for the purpose of evangelism and edification. Affirm: Jim Waldron. Deny: Ed Harrell .

Harrell was a rather laid back, low-key kind of speaker (more like a college professor than a preacher). He produced more than a dozen verses that speak of the church helping saints, but none that speak of helping saints only. He treated lightly passages that refer to helping "non-saints" (Gal. 6:10, II Cor. 9:12, 13; cf., Acts 24:17).

Waldron used these verses effectively to illustrate that not only do individual Christians have the responsibility to do good unto all, but local churches do also as they have the opportunity (the ability and the occasion). The purpose of this review is not to "rehash" various arguments and points made by the debaters. However, it is appropriate that I mention one point of significance as it gets to the heart of the truth as related to the first proposition.

Waldron at the beginning of his first speech asked Harrell a very simple question: "*If a church in India has a well on its property, would it be sinful to allow non-Christian neighbors to come and take water from that well?*" Keep in mind that in much of India, potable water is a valuable commodity -- some are forced to walk a mile or more for drinking water. Waldron asked the question in both his speeches, but Harrell would not say whether the church could or should allow non-saints to partake of their water. In fact, he was as silent as a tomb on that question and others.

Waldron made several good arguments that were presented very simply and forcefully with beautifully designed power point slides. His simplicity made it easy for the Indian brethren to see the absurdity of the "saints-only" doctrine. His presentation on the second proposition was also presented in a simple and straight forward manner and was equally effective. All speeches were in English. Only time and eternity will tell just how much good was done by this debate.

If you would like a DVD of it you may write and request a copy. DVDs will be available after the first of the year on two compact discs. Please enclose \$2.50 for the cost of the two CD's and postage. Make check to "Know Your Bible." The address is: Bangalore Debate, 1824 Roane State Highway, Box 171, Harriman, TN 37748.

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A REPORT FROM A NATIVE BROTHER

The following letter is from a young gospel preacher, James Guite, who has been defending the truth against these forbidding brethren for the last five years. Two congregations in his native place have been split by these who bind where God has not bound; even to the extent that they have forced the faithful out of their buildings. They even went so far as to get the underground anti-government forces (read domestic terrorists) involved in order to force the faithful out; who now must meet in a rented hall at two different colleges.

Dear Bro. Jim,

Your power point presentation in the debate was indeed very powerful. How pointed it was to see the "SAW" of the forbidding group cutting apart Gal. 6:10. (*Don had created a presentation slide showing a saw cutting this text into two parts, saying the church may obey the second half to help saints, but cannot obey the first half and help non-saints in benevolence.*)

I was wondering how you could originate such a wonderful, emphatic, self-explicit and convincing presentation. Let all the praises be to the Almighty who granted you the wisdom (James 1:5), and boldness; and stood with you to shut the mouth of those who came in stealthily to snatch away some of the flocks.

I would be very glad if you could also send me your power point presentation through mail. I want to see it, and study it again and again. How very powerful are verses like Gal 6:10; 2 Cor. 9:13 & Jas. 1:27. They tried their level best to do away with them, but in vain. God's wisdom can never be outsmarted. Thank God for all the faithful brethren opposing the forces of divisive doctrines.

May God bless you and work with you more mightily in the days to come

For the cause of Calvary
James Guite
Bangalore, Karnataka, South India

Final Note: I will be back in the States December 21st. Love to all.

Jim S. Waldron

