

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32

“And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”

June 12, 2022

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH

by Wayne Goff

Churches of Christ in America are slowly drifting off into apostasy and most are loathe to admit it! Preachers are not preaching on it. Members are not aware of it. A certain apathy has overtaken churches that once were stalwarts of the faith. Only the Lord knows why this is happening now, but I have an idea that it is connected with no longer enduring sound doctrine, **2 Timothy 4:3**. Let me explain, and you readers can consider the evidence and come up with your own conclusions.

Changes In Preaching

I have been preaching now for 48 years and during that entire time I have watched as brethren have subtly turned away from sound, convicted gospel preaching. You can see it when brethren will travel across the state for a softball tournament but will not drive 30 miles to attend a gospel meeting.

You can see it when brethren shift uncomfortably in their pews when the preacher mentions (1) denominations; (2) false doctrine; (3) public debates; and other things considered as “negative preaching.” You can see it as gospel meetings have slowly evolved into almost nothing — from two weeks to seven days, to six days, to five days, to four days (two of which are Sunday and Wednesday!). The argument for this is that we live in a modern time when so many things demand our time, energy, and attention. But the truth of the matter is brethren do not love the truth enough to study it, believe it, and attend to the preaching of it. You can see it when brethren want to be accepted by their worldly friends and neighbors at school, work, and public meetings, and to do so they compromise their convictions or hide them altogether. Most of these things have been around for the last 50 years or more, so this is nothing new.

Newer Changes

Recently things have turned worse as churches have “canceled” Sunday night services for a myriad of excuses but not for any really justifiable reasons. Imagine elders forbidding brethren from assembling on Sunday night at 5 or 6 o’clock because they no longer have scheduled services then. Imagine elders “locking the doors” to prevent brethren from using the building at that time! Yet that is exactly what has happened in Kansas City at a local church near us.

The argument for doing so is that the Bible doesn’t require us to meet on Sunday evening, the habit of meeting then evolved from World War II and shift work, and therefore we are just promoting “human tradition” by having it! Then Covid-19 hit America and this drove everyone to stay at home. Now that the pandemic is nearly over, few have returned to services on Sunday nights, while I suspect the truth is that they really do not want to attend.

The arguments against canceling any worship service are several: (1) one less hour of gospel preaching is a hazard. Strong churches are created by strong preaching. When churches eliminate Sunday night, they are keeping their preachers from preaching much needed sermons; (2) brethren need to hear more sermons, more classes, not less! The first church in Jerusalem met “steadfastly” and were taught the “apostles’ doctrine” thoroughly (**Acts 2:42**). I see churches and brethren today who are spiritually weak and biblically ignorant — even when they attend four hours per week! (3) sports teams are increasing the number of their events due to demand and money while religion is taking a back seat; (4) the modern-day

“weekend” is the time brethren use to get away from it all. While I am for “recreation” and I need much more of it, the supposed “week end” actually encompasses the “week beginning” (Sunday, the first day of the week, the Lord’s day) and Satan has subtly deceived us into thinking that this is ok! But brethren fail to see how much harm their ever-increasing absences are weakening the local church where they are members! (5) “Human tradition” has now become no Sunday night service in most churches of Christ, but nobody seems to complain about that! What are sound brethren to do when they WANT to attend more often?

Conclusion

So I wonder now as I near my own “retirement,” how much more apostasy brethren will accept before they finally stand up and say “enough is enough!” Or “we have gone too far!” Or “what has happened to us?” (And I haven’t even begun to discuss the numerous departures from “sound doctrine” that brethren have accepted!)

DON’T BE FOOLED!

James 1:22 gives us one of the most important warnings in all of Scripture; *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”* It is one of the great temptations, to see ourselves as great doers when the reality is very different. Often, we judge others by their actions but we judge ourselves by our intent. It is a mistake and one that leads us toward apostasy. Indeed, one of the signs of that very thing was that evil men would grow worse and worse, *“deceiving and being deceived”* (**2 Tim. 3:13**). We cannot make that mistake. What bigger fool is there than the man who fools himself?

In the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus would speak of the priest and the Levite who would pass by the man in need of help, intentionally avoiding him (**Luke 10:31,32**). They were examples of the typical religious elitists of the day, as many of the Jews trusted in themselves that they were righteous while despising others. They were not righteous at all. They did not practice mercy or sacrifice. They did their works to be seen by men and as they had their reward, their egos swelled and they were more convinced than ever that they were righteous.

How can we avoid their fate? How can we make sure we are not filled with delusions of grandeur concerning ourselves?

- Look For The Fruit. Judge yourself by what you have done, not by what you could do, or intend to do. Be honest.

- Keep It Quiet. If you have to tell people about your work, there is a good chance your motives are not pure.
- Expect Nothing. If you do good hoping to be repaid, you are in the wrong profession. You should be a banker.
- Hear The Word. Many only hear themselves. They pray to themselves. They consult themselves. They honor themselves. Make sure you are humbling yourself to God, looking into His Word, and following Jesus.

We can be the sort of people God wants us to be (**2 Tim. 3:16,17**). We can bridle our tongue and our whole body. We can discipline ourselves. As we submit to God, He will mold us. Anything less, and we are just fooling ourselves.

John Hines

Bare Facts

It is quite common for a person to be immodestly dressed. However, Christians are to shun this practice in keeping with the Scriptures in **1 Timothy 2:9,10** -- *“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.”* Compare also **1 Peter 3:3,4**.

The word of God censures the wearing of gaudy or sensually appealing clothes. A person may be guilty of this by “overdressing” through pride or vanity.

It seems to be equally possible for people to be immodestly undressed. At the season when little boys are thinking of going barefooted, their older brothers and sisters frequently “out-strip” them by baring considerably more than a foot.

Some pretend that this virtual undressing is to make the summer heat more bearable. Whom do they fool? They are not fooling those who have been in tropical climates and have seen demonstrated the fact that the surest way to parch to a crisp is by ignoring the need for a protective layer of light clothing.

Then, too, this disrobing always begins in the spring long before the weather becomes unbearably warm.

The psychologist understands that the wearing of scant clothing is an expression of the yearning which so many have to be bold, daring and risqué. It is a sensual form of exhibitionism. There is no shred of modesty in it.

Time was when such talk pointed to the public swimming places. Now it includes the front lawn, sidewalks, and streets of every city and town.

About all that remains to be done by those who want to be more bold than the rest is complete nudity. How long will our laws against even that be enforced?

Chastity involves more than abstinence from adultery. It includes a modest avoidance of that which encourages adulterous thought.

by Bob Crawley

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Did you know the Bible does not speak directly to man apart from the Bible?

There are two passages of Scripture from which we can logically deduce the conclusion stated above.

When Jesus was still on the earth, but near His death and departure He made a promise to His apostles. He would send them a Helper, also called a Comforter, in actuality the Holy Spirit. This Helper was to enable them to carry the message of Jesus to the world after His departure and return to heaven (**Acts 2:36; Ephesians 1:19-23**). *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” (John 14:26) “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.” (John 16:13)*

This Helper, the Spirit of truth would reveal to them the mind of God (**1 Corinthians 2:10-13**). When that revelation of God’s mind to the apostles was completed or perfectly finished (**1 Corinthians 13:8-10**), there would be no further revelation needed by man. Mankind would then be completely furnished to every good work (**2 Tim. 3:16,17**).

One of the things Jesus prayed for prior to His death was that His disciples would be united with one another and with God. This prayer stated the way this was to be accomplished was with the word of God, which is the truth (**John 17:17-21**). The Scriptures, the word of God, which is the truth tells us there was never to be any private or personal interpretation of it since it was provided by men guided by the Holy Spirit (**2 Peter 2:19-21**). Unity is destroyed when one claims a personal and private revelation from God. It always adds to or takes from what He has already revealed.

Something God has always been jealous of is His own word. In every generation of mankind we are taught not to alter or change what He has said. This happened in the garden when Satan altered the message from God to man (**Gen. 3:1-6**). When God gave the law to Israel by Moses, He warned them not to alter His word, *“You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.” (Deuteronomy 4:2)* When the New Testament was revealed through the apostles, we are told not to alter it by adding to, taking from or going beyond what it teaches (**Revelation 22:18,19; 2 John 9-11**).

What then, we ask, would be the reason or the value that God would appear to people such as Joseph Smith or Mary Baker Eddy? He would be altering the very word He tells us is completed and finished. The obvious conclusion is that these people are claiming something that cannot be proven as the original revelation was. God gave revealers of His will the power of the Holy Spirit to confirm the word they spoke (**Mark 16:15-18**). Where then is this power in those who claim a private revelation today?

Jim Stauffer

Nothing to Hide!

Consider this:

- If a man has some printed money but is not willing to have it examined, people think it is counterfeit.
- If a man is afraid to take a lie detector test, people think he is guilty of crime.
- If a man conducts a business but is unwilling to let anyone investigate it, folks think he is running a crooked business.

Yet many preachers teach doctrines that under no circumstances will they test or allow to be tested by the Bible. However, millions of people will accept them as upright, honest teachers of the truth, and will risk their salvation upon them. What makes the difference? The Bible instructs us to try the teachers (**1 John 4:1**). The truth never fears investigation! It has nothing to hide!

by Bill Crews

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

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ANSWER?**



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10