

IF I COULD DO CHURCH AGAIN



I Would Do It Better

By

PASTOR BROOKY R STOCKTON

If I Could Do Church Again 3.0



Brooky R Stockton, PHD
Pastor / Professor Theology, ret.
PO Box 884
Tijeras, New Mexico (87059)
Date Year

<https://nikeinsights.famguardian.org/>

<https://famguardian.org/>

<https://sedm.org/>

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Table of Contents | 3 |
| Preface | 5 |
| Acknowledgments | 6 |
| My Pastoral Journey | 7 |
| 1. My Testimony | 8 |
| 2. List of Things Done Right | 9 |
| 3. List of Things Lacking | 11 |
| 4. List of Things I Would Do Differently | 15 |
| 5. Summary of My Ministry | 19 |
| Church Building Resources | 21 |
| 6. God’s Message to Pastors | 22 |
| 7. God’s Message to Traitors | 22 |
| 8. The Pastor Search Letter | 23 |
| 9. The Marks of True Discipleship | 24 |
| 10. The Sloppy Church | 29 |
| 11. Clowns Entertaining the Goats | 31 |
| 12. Where Have All the Prophets Gone? | 33 |
| 13. Do Church with Dignity and Excellence | 35 |
| 14. The Sufficiency of Scripture | 40 |
| 15. The Tragedy of Church Incorporation | 47 |
| 16. How to Build a Good Church | 50 |
| 17. Rules for Church Meetings | 54 |
| 18. Rules for the Church from 1 Timothy | 60 |
| 19. Fastest Growing Religion in the World | 71 |
| 20. The First Communion in Scripture | 73 |
| 21. The Ordinance of Baptism | 76 |
| 22. The Ordinance of Headcoverings | 81 |
| 23. 1 Corinthians 11 – Five Sacred Symbols in Christianity | 93 |
| 24. The Ordinance of the Lord’s Supper | 97 |
| 25. Purity in the Camp | 101 |
| 26. Church Discipline | 105 |
| 27. Church Courts | 111 |
| 28. Judgment Must Begin at the House of God | 115 |
| 29. Dress Codes and the Permissive Pastor | 130 |
| 30. Women’s Dress in the Early Church | 133 |
| 31. Beware of the Sweet Church | 136 |
| 32. Managing Criticism | 138 |
| 33. Under Accusation | 141 |
| 34. Jesus, the Great Divider | 144 |
| 35. Slow Down | 147 |
| 36. Overcoming Racism | 148 |
| 37. How People Learn the Christian Faith | 148 |
| 38. Dostoevsky on the Importance of the Church | 150 |
| 39. A.W. Tozer on the Authority of Christ | 150 |

| | | |
|-----|---|------------|
| 40. | A Message for the Aging Church | 151 |
| 41. | Invocations to Start a Church Service | 152 |
| 42. | Beware of Antinomianism | 156 |
| 43. | The Beast, the Church, and Vaccines | 157 |
| 44. | Government is NOT God | 158 |
| 45. | When Liberals are in Charge of a Church | 160 |
| 46. | Where Have All the Men Gone? | 161 |
| 47. | What Does the Bible Say About Female Warriors | 163 |
| 48. | Is Deborah a Model for Female Church Leaders? | 170 |
| 49. | Doctrines of Demons | 173 |
| 50. | Should the Church Love Homosexuals? | 177 |
| 51. | In Defense of Hate | 179 |
| 52. | First Day Sabbath | 183 |
| 53. | The Compromising Church | 201 |
| 54. | The Banksters Are Back | 207 |
| 55. | Thieves in the Church | 210 |
| 56. | The Widow's Mite | 212 |
| 57. | Stewardship | 214 |
| 58. | Baptist Blues | 219 |
| 59. | How Pastors Become an Enemy of God | 221 |
| 60. | The "Me Too Movement" Goes to Church | 224 |
| 61. | The Spirit Told Me | 226 |
| 62. | Avoiding Capture by the "Isms" | 233 |
| 63. | Pastor, Are you Armed? | 240 |
| 64. | The Number One Need in the Church | 252 |
| 65. | The Cost of Soul-Winning | 253 |
| 66. | The Praying Church | 257 |
| | References | 263 |
| | Bibliography | 264 |

Cruci Dum Spiro Fido

Preface

I am a man of modest talents who serves Christ as a church planter, pastor, seminary professor, lawyer, and writer. I am on a blazing mission to stamp out mediocrity in today's Casual Coffee Cup so the church can become a *tour de force* in delivering Christ's church from the grips of averageness. Study "If I Could Do Church Again" to avoid common mistakes and to do church right.

This work contains my (1) Monday-morning pastoral-quarterback insights into church ministry with the hope that you will profit from the positives and negatives of my experience; and, (2) study-note resources to challenge and improve your own Christian ministry.

Dr. Brooky Stockton, ret. pastor / teacher

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to the websites for offering free pics for illustrations

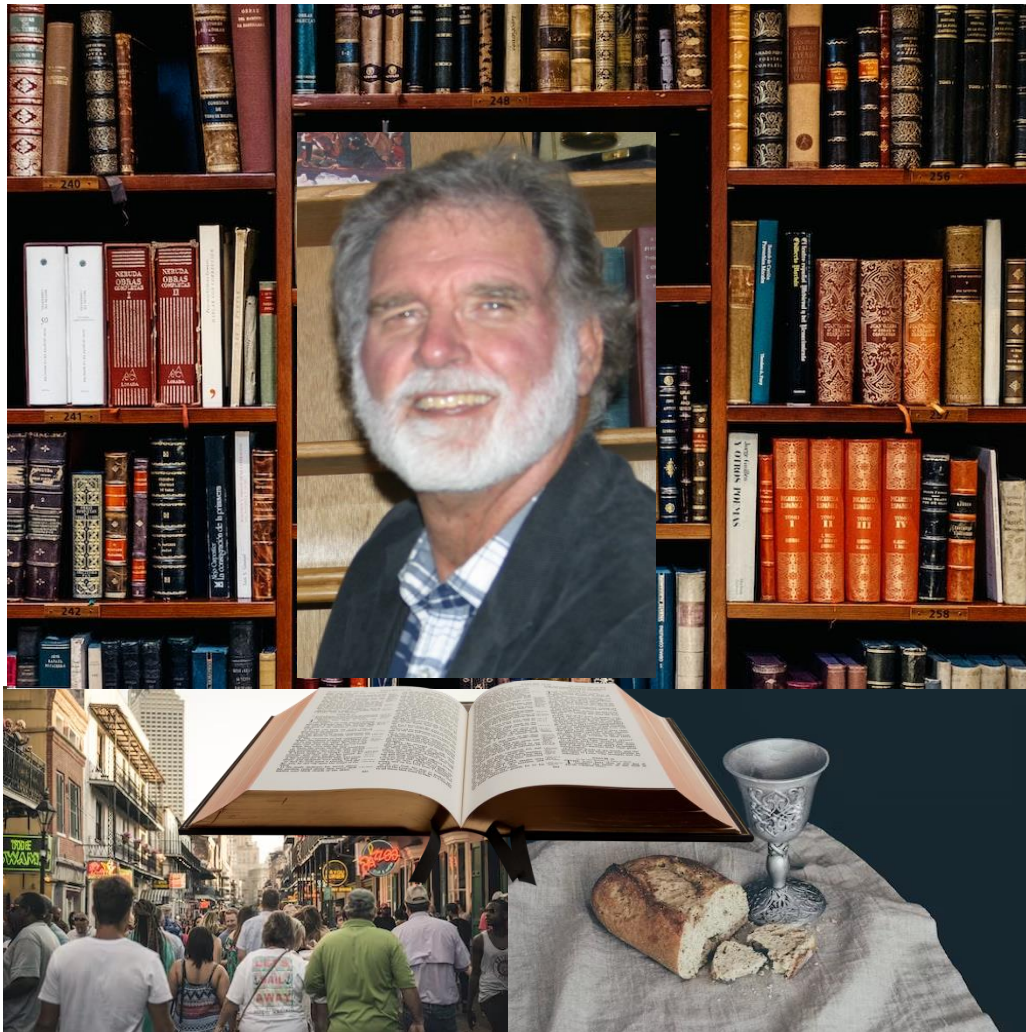
- Freepik
- Unsplash
- Art Explosions
- Creative Commons License # 89632483
- Unknown Sources

This work is for personal use and the blessing of others. It is not for sale (2023)

If any graphics in this work trespass on copyright laws, please inform so they can be removed.

Dr. Brooky Stockton
P.O. Box 1452
Tijeras, New Mexico - 87059

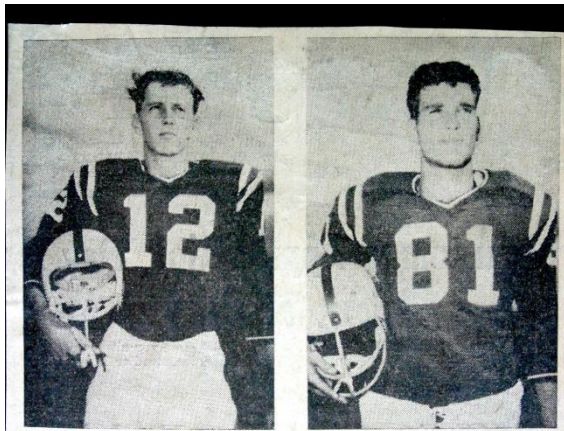
My Pastoral Journey



Family Motto: Cruci Dum Spiro Fido

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." – Galatians 2:20

1. My Testimony



BULLDOG CO-CAPTAINS — Leroy McDonald (left) and Brooky Stockton, both seniors, were elected co-captains of the Bulldog football team last week as the

My Sunday school teacher never made sense to me except once. One first-day Sabbath morning, he challenged us to read the Bible a little bit every day until we finish it.

That week I hoofed down to the local bookstore and bought me the biggest Bible you'd ever seen – the bigger the better. I dived into Genesis like a fish after a lure. Excitement rippled through my heart until I got to Leviticus. I hit an iceberg.

It took me forever to get through that priestly manual. Ug! Being non-plused by all the holiness laws didn't improve my motivation.

It took me three years to read from Genesis to Revelations. Shortly, thereafter, I met the summa cum laude in my college who asked me if I knew Christ as my Savior. Briefly explaining the gospel to me, I was stunned to find out he, the smartest student in college, believed that Christ, literally, tangibly, physically rose from the dead.

The lights came on and the Bible tasted like my mom's chocolate cookies. I bought a smaller Bible that I could carry around. I couldn't lay the book down and let it collect dust on some book shelf. I read it before classes, after class, and between classes.

Bored to the bones with secular studies, I quit college and went to Emmaus Bible school. These people loved the Book and had integrity. Before class my heart pounded with excitement as the professor walked through the door. I sat on the front row lapping up every word like a cat with a bowl of warm milk.

Shortly, thereafter people came to know Christ and a church was born. Going to work became a frustration because I could only study the Bible four hours a day.

Swept up in soul-winning, church planting, pastoring, study and teaching, I made all the dumb mistakes a young Christian pastor can make . . . but God was patient and His Word was self-corrective. Today, the Book of Leviticus is one of my favorites. I am more convinced now these ancient texts are the Sure Word of God and that the Scriptures are sufficient to "perfect" and "thoroughly" equip those who seek Him with a whole heart.

Moreover, the Lord gave me the skills of lawyer and the training of an attorney enabling me to serve the legal needs of those trapped in the nets of the police state and our corrupt judicial system.

Blessed beyond what my talents deserve..

2. List of Things Done Right



1. Prayer

Driven by a desire to know Christ, the Spirit impressed upon me to start the day with a serious hour of prayer. I made prayer lists and kept records of answered prayer. Archiving triumphs built my faith in the Lord.

2. Quiet Time

During and after prayer I would read the sacred text devotionally seeking to apply it to my life. I did not mingle this with sermon preparation time. After my daily bread, it was time for breakfast and devotions with the family.

3. Marriage

By the grace God, I married right. He gave me a beautiful wife who is my friend and sister in the Lord. She supports me totally and completely. We pray daily for our ministry and family.

I can't image trying to conduct a ministry with a complaining, contentious, bitter, odious woman who is angry over carrying the Christian cross!

4. Bible school

After we were married, my wife and I sold everything we had, gave to missionaries around the world, and headed off to Bible School

Taking my wife with me to school and attending classes together gave her the ability to understand my vision, zeal, and many faults.

5. Mentors

God gave me street wise Christian mentors. I attached myself to these veterans like barnacles on a whale. My contemporaries loved the Lord and had tons of zeal, but they lacked life experience. Fortunately, God gave these holy men the ability to tolerate me and I became better for it.

6. Evangelism

I made it my ambition to find someone to witness to every day. This was good. Learning how to proclaim and defend the faith made me strong, and this was the main means of building the church. Further, the task of evangelism helped me to understand human nature.

7. Working in the business world

Working in a secular environment not only provided a source of income, these work experiences taught me life skills one could not learn in the ministry.

8. **Focus on the family:** Marriage and children came first. Family devotions came first. Home was a place of laughter, game nights, limited T.V., work, and play. Saturdays, were filled with soccer, tennis, and football. No organized sports on Sunday. Sunday was church day . . . a time to be with God's people. Children in the home were the best years of our life.

9. Emphasis on Bible studies and Developing Male Leadership

Sometimes I had five or six Bible studies a week. Amazingly, men came to know Christ, and God used this to increase my understanding of the gospel.

10. Focus on the knowing the Bible and theology.

God directed me to plow through every book of the Bible every five years. This not only enriched me as a person, it endowed me with the skills and knowledge to theology classes in seminary. This habit of studying His Word made me a balanced, responsible, doctrinally accurate Christian pastor.

11. Women's roles and ministry.

My mentors taught me about male and female roles in the Christian ministry which prevented me from falling into the balderdash of feminism. This built responsible male-led families, and lovely supportive wives.

12. Concentration on Studying the Gospel

Hanging around the fundamentals of gospel doctrine kept me from flying off the merry go round of societal shifts. I never regret having a Bible-based ministry and resisting, highbrow cultural trends infecting the church.

13. Attention to Church Basics:

Concentrating on communion (breaking of bread), Bible readings, exegetical preaching, prayer, fellowship, church purity, church discipline and purity, baptism, Headcoverings, male leadership, became maximum strength power vitamins for church growth.

14. Church discipline

Not always pleasant, it had to be done. The church became holy and often those disciplined were often turned back to the Lord to the joy of all.

15. Seminary Training

I am grateful for the language skills and exposure to theology in seminary. I would do it again, but start at a much earlier age. That seminaries are cemeteries is a weird, nonsensical utterance held close to those committed to Biblical ignorance. If there is a problem with seminaries, it is that tuition costs too much – a problem that prevents would-be pastors from gaining knowledge necessary to have an exegetical ministry.

I loved my seminary experience. Being with students and teaching classes was like throwing Bear Rabbit into the briar patch.

16. Establishing autonomous, non-government approved churches

The fruit of evangelism was new believers. New believers needed a true church. Building churches forced me to confront the elephant in the room which was the civic pressure to become a “smooth operating” government approved 501 c 3 “religious organization.” To replace the beloved head of the church with the ugly IRS sent shivers down my spine. No could do!

17. Acquiring a church building

Obtaining a church building and having a physical presence in the community meant we were serious about Christianity, about being stable, and having a permanent influence in the community. Knowing the law and building a strong financial base was a requisite to purchasing a building without going into debt or becoming a State franchise. This was a difficult, painful experience for me. The ideal escaped me.

18. Providing an environment for church fellowship

People are socially minded and need one another. Our fellowship times and potlucks were like enchiladas at a Mexican fiesta – loved by all.

19. Traveling to Israel

I’ve been to Israel three times. Whether taking a pilgrimage to the “Holy” Land or engaging archaeological excavations was equivalent to a year of Bible school. There is something about knowing the geography of Biblical history that adds interest, depth, authority, and perspective for a Bible teacher.

3. List of Things Lacking

I wish I had . . .



1. More training in church planting

I started my ministry on a hundred miles of bad road. I shared the gospel with anyone who would listen. This “rough rider” ministry rocketed these efforts into low earth orbit creating all kinds of safety risks. What do you do with a church when 90% of the people are under 40 years of age?

I had no formal training on how to start a church . . . lead a church . . . or pastor a church facing atmospheric drag and orbital debris.

This learn-as-you-go travel plan was like driving a new Chevy down a pothole filled road that broke our front axil more than once. I can’t help but think many broken axils could have been avoided with better training and less torque in the engine, but it was God’s travel plan for me.

2. More pastoral training

Oh, to have received training on preaching, leading church meetings, caring for sick sheep, and building an organization. Forming an “elder team” was Biblical, but hammered by personality challenges, weak agendas, and multiple conflicts.

3. More training in preaching

It takes time to learn how to preach accurately and meaningfully . . . to find “one’s self” as a teacher . . . to develop a method and style that honors God and actually builds the church. I never regret studying sermons or going to seminars. Formal training is essential for success. Too many preachers who have the gift of gab can talk for hours and saying nothing. We need better equipped, more competent, holy men.

4. More training in conflict management

Sheep kick and bite. Every flock has its own share of politics and drama queens. Many churches have Billy goats with Rambo personalities that butt heads and women whose tongues are tied in the middle and flappin’ at both ends.

I wish I had more sheep management courses that were not based on psychological trends so prevalent in modern churches. Psychoheresy based on secular pop psychology theories have no place in a Bible-based church.

A successful minister must understand church politics: personality types, motivations, human nature, their tactics, body language, and the like.

5. More patience . . . and more trust in God

I woke up every day saying to myself “are we there yet?” Having a living, growing church and a big gospel influence in community was important to me. Consequently, I was alert to every growth trend and too willing to change

itineraries. The introduction of new “programs” agitated the flock and rightly so. It took me a while to calm down, slow down, and be happy with duty. God was teaching me to trust Him for the results and to pace myself in this marathon. I had to learn that following Christ is in not a list of dos, but “in quietness and trust” is your strength (Isaiah 30:15). Avoid radical church shifts.

6. Less patience toward traitors.

Every church has miscreants that use slander, backbiting, gossip, slurs, and disparagement to maim the pastor and to divide the flock. Every good minister will have to learn to deal with backstabbers, snipers, and Sherman tanks in the church.

“Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered . . . ” – Zechariah 13:7

As a young pastor, I was too nice, too patient, and too tolerant of muckraking. As I matured God taught me to confront these defectors swiftly and severely. A good minister will build and protect the flock howbeit imperfectly. In times of weakness (exhaustion) that pastor needs faithful men around him that will protect him and the flock from those that would scatter the sheep by striking the shepherd.

7. More training in music

Music is essential to church ministry – for worship, joy, and edification. Oh, to have to have more musical skills. If I could do it again, I would have joined male choirs in the community and taken music lessons.

8. More tent making skills

Those “in between times” in the Christian ministry crushed me. I can’t help but think that learning a blue-collar, handy-man trade or skill would have relieved much stress.

9. Addressed finances in the church more often

Men and women love money, and they know little about the stresses and crosses born by ministers. They will rob a pastor blind if the pastor lets them. My challenge was how to teach on money, giving, and tithing without appearing like a beggar or a “gimme-gimme” church. This fear kept me addressing stewardship issues responsibly for the good of the church.

10. More of an effort to unite with like-minds

The life of a minister can be lonelier than a polar bear. True friends are rare. Uniting with others with cross-carrying minds and other “Bible junkies” needed more energy.

11. Substantive legal training

It wasn't long into my ministry when members of my flock were victims of crime and I found myself naked as a jay-bird when it came to the knowledge of the law. One time a victim of sexual assault slugged the assailant breaking his nose and spilling blood all over my office. On one occasion an over aggressive business man sued me frivolously for 5 million dollars for supporting the cause of a lawyer friend. On another occasion the IRS seized a friend's house, salary, and truck without a warrant, without a court order, and without a jury trial for not paying \$300,000 dollars of taxes when he only made \$25,000 dollars a year.

I discovered that learning Biblical law, American law, legal terminology, commercial terms, legalese, codes and statues, essential for success. Knowing the Bill of Rights backwards and forwards was essential to guide the church, to help people in trouble with some government agency. The Bible is a law book and to live accurately one must study right and wrong; to know how to file complaints in court; to write contracts; and, to defend people against the police state.

12. Less business meetings

Individually, people are great, but when they come together, they turn into idiots. Everyone has an agenda to talking about weather, swatting flies, or talking about the problems of Frank and Shelly. Limit business meeting, and when you attend one, is sure your written agenda item is fulfilled for the good of the church.

13. Had established church courts to mediated substantial member conflicts

Knowing about the history church courts and binding arbitration contracts would have relieved a lot of stress among contentious members of the church.

14. Not established adult Sunday schools

I wish I had eliminated Sunday Schools. Most adult Sunday Schools are a complete waste of time because they are led by incompetent older men. .

15. Been more authoritative on Bible truth that others deemed controversial.

The Bible is a counter-culture manual. I taught Biblical ethics, and addressed issues of dress, headcoverings, women's roles, and duties of men, but often did so too timidly. A more bold, uncompromising spirit was needed when teaching or discussing doctrines that did not fit the wokeness of our time.

4. List of Things I Would Do Differently

If I could do church again, I would . . .



Figure 1: Unsplash

1. Establish liturgy and more responsive readings

Liturgy is essential for growing the whole church in the faith. If I could do it again I would establish liturgies on the following subjects: the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, Beatitudes, the Apostle's creed, certain psalms and parables and gospel passages.

2. Establish dogmatic festivals and traditions to prevent apostasy.

Each church has good traditions and bad traditions. Some need to be kept, some developed, and some "sacred cows" need to be turned out to pasture.

Dogmatic Liturgy is essential to prevent apostasy. The church has authority to create dogmatic services that emphasize the fundamentals of the faith (Matthew 18:18-20). If I could do it again I would establish yearly church traditions . . . programs . . . readings . . . and liturgy on the following: Christmas Sunday, Christ's circumcision Sunday (emphasize his humanity), Easter Services, Pentecost Services with an emphasis on law, Reformation Sunday with an emphasis on gospel accuracy,, Bible Sunday to emphasize the accuracy and authority of Scripture, Stewardship Sunday, Remembering Church History, and Galatians-Colossians Warning Sunday about departing from the gospel by plunging into some cultural trend: psychology, homosexuality, feminism, gender-bender nonsense, Charismatic confusion, etc.

3. Provide shorter messages

I would exegete texts and avoid jumping around from Scripture to Scripture unless I was preaching on a Biblical topic. My messages would be limited to 30-35 minutes so we could emphasize the Lord's Supper, singing, prayer, and liturgy.

4. Eliminate adult Sunday schools

If I could do it again, I would NOT have any adult Sunday School programs. Rather, I would emphasize Bible readings, the Lord's Supper, singing, prayer, and Scripture teaching for the whole congregation. I would have one Sunday Morning church service and NO evening services.

I would have nurseries, Sunday Schools for Children under 12, but no adult Sunday schools. Sunday Schools degenerate into announcements, personal

counseling sessions, gossip meetings, touch-feely group therapy sessions, another preaching time by a yakety-yak male that believes Sunday School is his time for the class to listen to him talk about his beliefs. Moreover, Sunday school can easily degenerate into female dominated discussions.

A good Sunday School class has a mature, discerning male leader that sees himself as a manager of questions on a Bible subject and not a dispenser of all heavenly and earthly knowledge. Skilled Bible study leaders are rare. I would eliminate the adult Sunday School class altogether. In its place, I would encourage weekly small group gatherings (with strict rules) that will live or die based on the purpose of the class and the skills of the leader.

Moreover, I would absolutely forbid a small group with men in it to be taught by a woman . . . the only exception to this rule would be a service groups that offers a hands-on ministry in the community which our beloved sisters seem to excel in organizational skills.

I would emphasize mid-week Bible study / prayer time for men led by the pastor; and, a women's prayer, Bible study led by a spiritually mature, competent older woman.

5. Urge measured neighborhood Bible Studies

Small group ministries are essential for church growth. A pastor cannot do it all. But, managing a small group takes leadership-discernment-listening skills. Ministry team leaders must be trained. Bring in experts to train others. Don't pretend to be a know-it-all pastor.

Moreover, Bible study leaders must learn to shut their mouth, to stop talking, and to see themselves as a manager of questions, rather than a dispenser of knowledge; as a question machine, not an answering machine. A Bible study that turns into a place for sermonettes is a colossal failure.

6. Set minimal, rules of order

Rules are essential for order and discipline. But, setting rules can create conflict among "free spirits. What you allow in moderation will become an excuse for others to do in excess. I had to learn to take stands, set rules for the glory of God, and risk offending people.

If you have rules, you will be called "legalistic." Set minimal, sensible rules and learn how to defend yourself against criticism.

7. Establish Dress Codes

I would be death on casual, sloppy dress for church.

You can talk about modesty all day and everyone will agree with you. But, set a rule for dress in church that defies the latest fashion like not wearing jeans with holes in them to church, and the sheep will baa and kick. Tough!

I had to set honorable dress codes for myself as a minister, and to establish dress code for both men and women. I would set rules against men wearing tank tops to church or sporting godless tattoos, but with less timidity. It must be done so we can focus on our mission and not the ugly display of flesh.

8. Lord's Supper Every Week

We celebrated the Lord's Supper each week, but I would move it to Sunday morning.

The Lord's Supper is the most important meeting of the church because it focuses the whole body on Christ, the cross, and His salvation (Acts 2:42). Making the Lord's Supper the central practice of the whole church enables the body to be Christ-centered and not pastor-centered nor preaching-centered nor music centered.

I would develop a weekly Sunday morning worship service (communion) with Bible readings, liturgy, prayer, singing and sharing of the elements. It would have dignity, honor, and esthetic excellence. We would sing famous hymns and not praise songs with endless "I" centered themes. I would appoint two or three holy men to pray, and two or three holy men to share brief one minute devotion about Christ, the blood, the cross, justification, or a gospel subject. Prayers and devotions would be written out. I would purge church services of hillbilly, local yokel prayers! The worship service would be organized around a gospel theme and not willy-nilly.

9. Be more liberal with modes of baptism

Baptism is a necessary church ordinance. I would consider R.C. Sproul's view of infant baptism. Further, I would establish sprinkling / pouring as method of baptism. How can any church afford spending \$400,000 dollars plus to build a baptismal that meets all the dressing needs and city codes for handicap services? Immersion is good, but expensive and impractical in an urban society.

10. To unapologetically practice the ordinance of headcoverings

My first church practiced the dogma of headcovering . . . but I did it too timidly.

The practice of headcoverings in 1 Corinthians 11 is a church ordinance just as important as the Lord's Supper and baptism. The church practiced the rite of headcoverings meticulously until the avalanche of free sex and pornography swamped the culture in the 1960s.

Furthermore, this ordinance is an antidote for woman's suffrage, feminism, homosexuality, abortion, gender-bender nonsense, divorce, friction in marriage, antinomianism, and a lack of holiness in the body. I never regret initiating this practice, but if I had to do it again, I would do proudly and boldly. I would

create position papers on this subject and make them available for distribution. When addressing this subject, I would do it humbly, but with the authority of the whole Scripture.

11. Practice wearing clergy attire

Because I had no formal training to be a pastor or to be in the role of a pastor, pastoral dress was never a topic of discussion,

If I could do church again, I would adopt minimal clergy attire . . . at least preaching with a black robe. This would remind me that when I am in the pulpit, I must represent the Lord accurately and graciously. This would remind the people to respect the ministry and to treat his message seriously.

Further, I would insist that all choir members wear a robe to avoid the flaunting of individual fashions, and individualism. The choir is God's choir and the music team needs to sing, dress, and behave like they represent the King of kings.

12. Develop or adopt a Catechism

If I could do it again, I would develop a catechism for children and adults that would insure a proper foundation for church membership. I like the traditions of Fairhaven Bible Chapel in San Leandro California.

13. Expect problems; Handle criticism better.

If I could do it again, I would study church politics and conflicts. I was always stunned by so many ethical problems in the flock until my wife told me, "Your office is the garbage pit of the West. God sent you these problems because He knew you would handle them Biblically to the best of your ability." After she said this, my spirit rested. Not only was I at peace, I welcomed people problems with new vigor in the strength of the Lord.

14. Make the Church Staff the Ministry Team

I would not have elders making decision for ministries of the church for which they are not involved.

If I had an elder team, the elder team would have a limited function; that is, they would be a visitation team, or pastor advisory team, or a business meeting team, but not all three.

Elder teams are packed with men with different gifts, ambitions, weaknesses, and agendas. Like government, elder teams tend to expand their jurisdiction to control the pastor, church finances, church families, and doctrinal issues. Often time, elders have no ministry in the church. They are wealthy men with lots of opinions about how the pastor should perform and the church governed. Get these men off the board. We need solid, humble, pure, holy servant males on an elder team. No women allowed!

If I had to do it again, the elder teams would be advisory in nature and have no decision making authority.

In its place, I would establish a ministry team that meets once a month that would include ministry leaders. These people would also be advisory and would be endowed with power to make decisions about the direction of their ministry.

I would accept responsibility for the whole church and not share that responsibility with any man. Ultimate decisions would fall on my shoulders. While voting may be indicative, the church would not function like an irresponsible democracy where no one accepts responsibility.

Men, out of pride, will destroy a church battling for their agenda, but a good pastor will never make a decision to intentionally hurt the church. The shepherd should make ultimate decisions for the good of the flock. Get rid of voting and the democratic mindset. A benevolent dictator is far superior to an irresponsible democracy.

15. Unite with others

I would invest more time and energy to locate and unite with men of like mind . . . even join a denomination with like values.

It is necessary to have a strong, independent, local church, but it is also important to unite with others of like mind. I would let my church know that we will look for a denomination to join . . . if we can find it. My personal church choice would be a Calvary Chapel model or a Presbyterian Model where presbyters meet to discuss the issues of our times. I would avoid the democratic, voting SB Baptist model like the black plague.

This servant longs to see assemblies delivered from Coffee Cup Christianity and become His holy church. Consider carefully the Study Resources in "If I Could Do Church Again," and God can use this to empower your ministry and to be a servant of His Majesty.

5. Summary of My Ministry

By the grace of God, the Lord gave me the best mentors a man could ever ask for: Men who helped me grow in Bible knowledge, life & ministry skills, and in the practice of law. God surrounded me with men more talented than me: Don Neilson (CO), Walter Steitz (CO), Marion Michaux (CO), Jim Wright (CO), John

Walden (CO), Elden Daniel (CO), Oscar Black (NM), Bill McDonald (CA), John McCallum (IL), Bill Taylor (CO), Jean Gibson (CA), Dr. Steven Collins (NM), Jean Walsh (NM), John Rushdoony (CA), Pastor John Weaver (AL), Antonio Gutierrez (NM), Chris Hansen (CA), Walter Check (AZ)

By the grace of God, the Lord enabled me to grow in the skills of personal evangelism where I became a practitioner of the soul – skills that God used to start Christian ministries, establish Christian schools, grow churches, and serve the legal needs of those trapped by the corruption of the DOJ and courts.

By the grace of God, He gave me knowledge of fundamental law and plenty of experience in legal land.

By the grace of God, He enabled me to start two Christian schools (CO, NM), a Boys Ranch (CO), and churches. I served as President of an Evangelical Pastoral Fellowship, President of New Mexicans Against Pornography, the Dean of Men and Professor of Theology at Trinity Seminary (NM), a Baptist Pastor (NM), and director of numerous ministries (Nike Ministries). The Lord gave me three tours of the Holy Land including experiences on the archaeological digs at Bethsaida and the City of Ai. Later in life I received legal training and started Judicial Watch of New Mexico, a law education ministry and an organization for political activism.

By the grace of God ministries grew, even doubling or tripling in membership. On two occasions I was informed by two different denominational leaders that the churches in which I served were the fastest growing churches in the denomination.

Yes, I had conflicts, and men had their points of contentions with me. But, God graciously gave these men patience to work alongside of His flawed servant.

By the grace of God, He surrounded me with gifted men whose skills were greater than mine. At all times, I was treated better than my talents deserved!

Dr. Brooky Stockton

Church Building Resources



Figure 2:
Unsplash: Jack Sharp Photograph Free Download

Cruci Dum Spiro Fido

2 Corinthians 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to **edification**, and not to destruction.

~~~~~

The following materials are unedited sermon notes and seminary lectures that may provide a resource for the Lord to build your ministry.

## 6. God's Message to Pastors

*"Thus says the LORD of hosts: If you (pastors) will walk in my ways and keep my charge, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here." – Zechariah 3:7.*

*"True instruction was in his mouth (Levi / priesthood), and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity." – Malachi 3:6*

## 7. God's Message to Traitors

### 1 Samuel 15:3

*Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction all that they have. Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'" - 1 Samuel 15:3*

*"Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered . . . " – Zechariah 13:7*

Dear Pastor:

Serve the Lord with integrity and holiness.

Know that every true minister has a Judas – usually a wealthy, sophisticated engineer or business man in the church with an evil eye toward the pastor and the church. Even Jesus, who did everything right, had a traitor. David had an Absalom and an Ahithopel; Paul had a Demas.

Dating back to 1534, during the reign of Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII, legal statutes made it treason to refer to the ruler as a tyrant. The penalty for such a crime was death.

Macbeth opens with Thane of Cawdor being accused of treason and sentenced to death without trial. Later on, **Lady Macduff affirms before his son that traitors "must be hanged"**.

Learn the lesson! Don't tolerate treachery, treason, defamation, libel, aspersion, gossip, maligning, defaming or anyone traducing your ministry. God is not calling you to be patient with traitors to the gospel or to you. A rebuke by a

friend is acceptable, but backbiting with the intent to crush your ministry must be dealt with swiftly and severely.

You must be like David, loyal to your mentors and to your people (1 Samuel 24). If you assault a weak leader, you are providing your ministry team with a model of how you want them to treat you when you are weak. Notice how David treated Saul. He did not lift up a hand to injure the man or his reputation. Thus, David provided his men with a model of how to treat a weak leader (protect them); and, when David was a weak king during the Absalom revolt his men surrounded him and protected him from the rebels.

Study 2 Corinthians and learn how Paul defended himself when the chickens were pecking under the porch about his ministry.

## 8. The Pastor Search Letter

### The Pastor Search

From the Chairman of the Board of Deacons at First Church

Date: 62 A.D.

To the Deacon Board of First Church:

As you know, our search committee has been trying to locate a pastor for our 501 (c) 3 organization— a pastor of whom we can be proud — a man who can preach, teach, write, sing, lead music, administrate, visit, pray, evangelize, tell jokes, cook, counsel the hurting, and pet the sheep.

On my trip to Macedonia, I met a preacher who wants to establish a church in our area and I asked him about his qualifications. I did not know what to say. Please advise me as to how I should answer.

He is a short man in his sixties who was raised a Jew, but he converted to Christianity while in his mid-thirties. He has a speech impediment and a loathsome eye disease. His astounding resume' includes three missionary tours. Some say he is one of the greatest evangelists of our time, but I'm not too sure about that. Though he has been instrumental in establishing over 25 churches, he has split many synagogues in the area.

The man is opinionated and controversial. Sometimes he refuses to take money for his preaching, and supports himself through his blue-collar craft. Some say he is a negative man because he preaches against circumcision and Zionism.

Some say the man is a heretic because he preaches against the law as a means to salvation. He upset the vegetarians because he said they were no longer under the Torah's dietary laws, and the Greeks were disturbed because he rebuked them for eating ham sandwiches in front of the Jews at a church potluck. Everywhere he goes there seems to be trouble. The man has been accused, beaten, arrested, imprisoned, put in stocks, and stoned. By the scars on his back, it looks like he has received 39 stripes on more than one occasion. Early in his life, he escaped from King Aretas having been lowered over the wall in a large fruit basket. He is obviously not submissive to civil authorities.

While he was incarcerated in Philippi, He refused to yield his constitutional rights, and the Mayor of Philippi gave him a police escort out of the city. In Thessalonica, he preached there was another king besides Caesar. This is bound to get him into political trouble. Even Felix and Festus imprisoned him for allegedly creating a riot in Jerusalem.

The talk around town is that Caesar is likely to indict him for treason against the State. The Macedonians said he preached against Socrates and Plato. Many were offended because he said Jesus is the only way God. He is not only politically incorrect, he preaches against psychologists, the high priests of our society. He seems to have difficulty in getting along with others. The Galatian churches do not want him back, and highly-esteemed Demas will not have anything to do with the man. He and Barnabus argued in Antioch over a missionary candidate. One wonders about his relational skills! After all, if a man can't get along with Barnabus, who can he get along with?

Please advise me what to do. The man is insistent on coming to our area. His name is Paul the Apostle, sent not from men, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father.

The Deac

P.S. A messenger from Corinth just arrived and reported that the brethren were disturbed by Paul's authoritarian approach to handling a young man who just married his father's wife. Maybe we should ask Demas to be our pastor. He'll obey the government and help us to become a government approved church. He is respected in the community, and he is a man of means. I know we would be proud to have him as our pastor.

## 9. The Marks of True Discipleship

When I was a young Christian, I was greatly blessed by the Plymouth Brethren.



These people love the Bible and our precious Savior.



The most influential book in my early life was "True Discipleship," by William McDonald, former President of Emmaus Bible School.

I've prayed with the man, walked with him, and listen to him speak many times. I am pleased to present a portion of his work here and encourage all our readers to purchase his book and to reflect on what it means to be a true disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Once I was over at his one room apartment seeking guidance on how to follow Christ. His apartment had a chair, a couch, some bookshelves full of books, and a small dining table set for four. Glancing at an open closet, I saw a few suits, a hand full of shirts, and three pairs of shoes neatly arranged.

Bill shared with me how he was on his way to being a millionaire when the Lord, through His Word, led him to sell all his "treasures," and give his stash of cash to missionaries, and to live by faith.

He never changed. He lived simply and sacrificially for Christ writing and preaching the rest of his life.

Here is a man that practiced what he preached! He died as he had lived, a true disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Enjoy His work on "True Discipleship" and may the Lord give you faith to deny yourself, take up your cross, and to follow Him (BRS).

-----  
"Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." Mark 9:35NIV

The pathway to true discipleship begins when a person is born again. It begins when the following events take place:

When a person realizes that he is sinful, lost, blind and naked before God.

. When he acknowledges that he cannot save himself by good character or good works.

When he believes that the Lord Jesus Christ died as his Substitute on the Cross.

When by a definite decision of faith, he acknowledges Jesus Christ as his only Lord and Savior. This is how a person becomes a Christian. It is important to emphasize this at the outset.

Too many people think that you become a Christian by living a Christian life. NOT at all!

You must first become a Christian before you can live the Christian life.

The life of discipleship outlined in the following pages is a supernatural life. We do not have the power in ourselves to live it. We need divine power. Only when we are born again do we receive the strength to live as Jesus taught. Before reading any further, ask yourself the question, "Have I ever been born again? Have I become a child of God by faith in the Lord Jesus?" If you have not, receive Him now as your Lord and Savior. Rather, He seeks those who will give Him first place in their lives.

"He looks today, as He has ever looked, not for crowds drifting aimlessly in His track, but for individual men and women whose undying allegiance will spring from their having recognized that He wants those who are prepared to follow the path of self-renunciation which He trod before them"<sup>1</sup> – H. A. Evan Hopkins.

Nothing less than unconditional surrender could ever be a fitting response to His sacrifice at Calvary. Love so amazing, so divine, could never be satisfied with less than our souls, our lives, our precious all. The Lord Jesus made stringent demands on those who would be His disciples – demands that are all but overlooked in this day of luxury living. Too often we look upon Christianity as an escape from hell and a guarantee of heaven. Beyond that, we feel that we have every right to enjoy the best that this life has to offer. We know that there are those strong verses on discipleship in the Bible, but we have difficulty reconciling them with our ideas of what Christianity should be. We can accept the fact that soldiers give their lives for patriotic reasons.

We do not think it strange that Communists give their lives for political reasons. But that "blood, sweat and tears" should characterize the life of a follower of Christ somehow seems remote and hard to grasp. And yet the words of the Lord Jesus are clear enough. There is scarcely any room for misunderstanding if we accept them at their face value. Here are the terms of discipleship as laid down by the Savior of the world:

## THE SEVEN MARKS OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

### 1. A supreme love for Jesus Christ.

*"If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26).*

This does not mean that we should ever have animosity or ill-will in our hearts toward our relatives, but it does mean that our love to Christ should be so

great that all other loves are hatred by comparison. Actually, the most difficult clause in this passage is the expression, “yea, and his own life also.” Self-love is one of the stubbornness hindrances to discipleship. Not until we are willing to lay down our very lives for Him are we in the place where He wants us to be.

## **2. A denial of self.**

*“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself...” (Matthew 16:24).*

Denial of self is not the same as self-denial. The latter means foregoing certain foods, pleasures, or possessions. But denial of self means such complete submission to the lordship of Christ that self has no rights or authority at all. It means that self-abdicates the throne. It is expressed in the words of Henry Martyn, “Lord, let me have no will of my own, or consider my true happiness as depending in the smallest degree on anything that can befall me outwardly, but as consisting altogether in conformity to Thy will.

“My glorious Victor, Prince divine, Clasp these surrendered hands in Thine, At length my will is all thine own, Glad vassals of a Savior’s throne.” H. G. C. Moule

## **3. A deliberate choosing of the cross.**

*“If any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross...” (Matthew 16:24).*

The cross is not some physical infirmity or mental anguish; these things are common to all men. The cross is a pathway that is deliberately chosen. It is “a path which so far as this world goes is one of dishonour and reproach” — C. A. Coates. The cross symbolizes the shame, persecution and abuse which the world heaped upon the Son of God, and which the world will heap on all who choose to stand against the tide. Any believer can avoid the cross simply by being conformed to the world and its ways.

## **4. A life spent in following Christ.**

*“If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24).*

To understand what this means, one need simply ask himself, “What characterized the life of the Lord Jesus?” It was a life of obedience to the will of God. It was a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. It was a life of unselfish service for others. It was a life of patience and longsuffering in the face of the gravest wrongs. It was a life of zeal, of expenditure, of self-control, of meekness, of kindness, of faithfulness and of devotion (Galatians 5:22, 23). In order to be His disciples, we must walk as He walked. We must exhibit the fruit of Christ-likeness (John 15:8).

## **5. A fervent love for all who belong to Christ.**

*“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35).*

This is the love that esteems others better than oneself. It is the love that suffers long and is kind. It vaunts not itself and is not puffed up. It does not behave itself unseemly; seeks not its own, is not easily provoked; thinks no evil. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Without this love, discipleship would be a cold, legalistic asceticism.

#### **6. An unswerving continuance in His Word.**

*“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed” (John 8:31).*

For real discipleship there must be continuance. It is easy enough to start well, to burst forth in a blaze of glory. But the test of reality is endurance to the end. Any man who looks back after putting his hand to the plow is not fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9:62). Spasmodic obedience to the Scriptures will not do. Christ wants those who will follow Him in constant, unquestioning obedience.

*Keep me from turning back.*

*The handles of my plough with tears are wet,*

*The shears with rust are spoiled, and yet, and yet,*

*My God! My God! Keep me from turning back.*

#### **7. A forsaking of all to follow Him.**

*“So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33).*

This is perhaps the most unpopular of all Christ’s terms of discipleship, and may well prove to be the most unpopular verse in the Bible. Clever theologians can give you a thousand reasons why it does not mean what it says, but simple disciples drink it down eagerly, assuming that the Lord Jesus knew what He was saying. What is meant by forsaking all? It means an abandonment of all one’s material possessions that are not absolutely essential and that could be used in the spread of the gospel.

The man who forsakes all does not become a shiftless loafer; he works hard to provide for the current necessities of his family and himself. But since the passion of his life is to advance the cause of Christ, he invests everything above current needs in the work of the Lord and leaves the future with God. In seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, he believes that he will never lack food and clothing. He cannot conscientiously hold on to surplus funds when souls are perishing for want of the gospel. He does not want to waste his life accumulating riches that will fall into the devil’s hands when Christ returns for His saints. He wants to obey the Lord’s injunction against

laying up treasure on earth. In forsaking all, he offers what he cannot keep anyway, and what he has ceased to love.

Indebted to William McDonald, BRS / pastor

## 10. The Sloppy Church

*“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” - 1 Corinthians 10:31*



Figure 3: Unsplash

The pastor stood up dressed in blue jeans and a dark t-shirt to read the Word. He did a nice job exegeting Scripture, but I had to ask, “Why is he so casual?”

A few weeks later, the pastor was absent, and a deacon gave a “Christmas message” dressed in blue jeans, a mechanics vest, and boots with some kind of brown goo caked on the sides of his leather. He looked like he’d just come from doing his chores in the barnyard.

His “sermon” did not contain a central text; and, his first ten sentences began with the word “I.” Further, his message did not focus on Jesus’ birth. But, it did contain all the Christian phrases he’d heard over the last 20 years.

According to John Blake at CNN, “people are really letting go and taking that whole “come as you are thing too far.”

*“It’s like some people decided to stop mowing the lawn and then decided to come to church,” says DeBonville, rector at the Church of the Good Shepard in Massachusetts. “No one dresses up for church anymore.”*

*“Instead of donning their Sunday Best, many are just showing up in whatever they wore on Saturday mowing the lawn. Some church leaders are encouraging the trend by dressing in jeans and untucked “Banana Republic” shirts themselves to create a “seeker-friendly” atmosphere to attract souls who might not be Christians yet, but are thinking about it. If they see a pastor sharing the gospel in some*

*track pants, I guess they might be more inclined to accept Christ?"*

### **Principles affecting dress from 1 Corinthians 10**

*"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." - 1 Corinthians 10:31*

- The LORD God is a great King. When we dress and act our best, we honor him as a respectable, regal Monarch (Malachi 1:14).
- The Scripture says "do **all** things decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40).

The word "decently" means behaving in a way that conforms to acceptable standards — the standards set for the house of God **not** the local track team.

The word "order" refers to the rules and standards of a holy society.

- When there is a cloud in the pulpit there is a fog in the pew; when there is dirt on the pastor, there is mud on the sheep.
- When a pastor fails to reflect the glory of the King (Malachi 1:14), the people do not understand the dignity of Christ.
- If the pastor does not dress up, the people will dress down.
- If the pastor is casual about what he wears, the parishioners will be casual about the Word of God.
- If the pastor doesn't care about the message his attire sends, why should the people care about the mission of the church? How could a visitor come away from a casually dressed church gathering thinking that Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of Lords?
- As looking rich is vain so is looking poor (James 2).

### **Application**



Figure 4: Source DeMilked

- This text implies Christians should array themselves properly, decently, with dignity when attending church.
- We don't have to look like a prince in Buckingham Palace, but we are going to meet the king. Dress appropriately for meeting royalty.
- Since the word "order" (taxi) refers to the "proper distribution of things," the text implies there is a proper, orderly way to dress when coming into God's temple.

- Instead of “dressing down” maybe we should consider “dressing up” to God’s standards following the rules of His House.
- Admittedly, styles change through the decades. At a minimal sanctified people should wash up and clean up before meeting with the Lord (Exodus 19:15). Modesty, propriety, and humility are always in style (1 Timothy 2:9).
- Hat removal by men and headcoverings by women is always appropriate (1 Corinthians 11)
- When approaching the LORD God, be beautiful within and without.
- Worship him in the beauty of holiness (Psalm 96:9) is a reference to the High Priest’s robes and the attractiveness of set-apart-ness. He is a “great King:” therefore, kiss His scepter. Act and dress your best (Malachi 1:14).
- One’s outward presentation is evidence of one’s inner disposition.
- Our Lord is a Great King and everything we do should reflect humility and excellence.

*“But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen” (Malachi 1:14).*

Lessons from the Royal Palace: The guide for meeting with the King of Queen of England is as follows: “It is said that in the presence of royalty you should avoid wearing something exposing your arms. Formal dress is recommended. Jeans and trainers will be unacceptable (Whales online: May 26, 2022).

- If you are the Lord’s servant, dress like a servant of his Majesty in Heaven.

## 11. Clowns Entertaining the Goats



Figure 5: Source - Syracuse.com

*“in the latter times some shall depart from the faith”- 2 Thessalonians 2:3*

Over the past few years, there has been a tidal wave of contemporary Christian church leaders who have dramatically announced they are ‘leaving the faith’ because they no longer believe the Bible is true.

Joshua Harris, author of ‘I Kissed Dating

Goodbye' decided he had had enough and walked away.

Baptist pastors write editorials in USA Today telling Christians to 'apologize to the LGBTQ+.' And, Jesse Duplantis still needs \$54 million for that new jet.

Marty Sampson, worship leader and popular writer, says he doesn't want to be a Christian anymore.

This should not surprise us. The Bible warns us about end time's apostasy.

*"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;" 1 Timothy 4:1,2 (KJV)*

One of the great tragedies of the modern 'seeker sensitive' church movement is that they created converts based on their feelings rather than on the Word of God.

Q: Why are many modern megachurches filled to overflowing on a Sunday morning?

A: Because they come for the music, and the fun, and the coffee shop in the lobby. They love how good they feel when the service is over. And none of that is biblical, and none of that is the gospel of the grace of God.

*"That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Ephesians 1:12-14 (KJV)*

*"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Revelation 3:14-16 (KJV)*

But when all you are fed is peppy, upbeat 'worship songs' with their endless and mind-deadening repetitive choruses in 'church services' that make you applaud everything that is said and done, you are spiritually dead. You are empty inside and unable to weather the storms of life. Eventually, you quit like Marty did and all the others have done.

Todd Starnes quotes John Cooper who expressed his deep concerns about so-called Christian leaders who are openly renouncing their faith and others who are turning their backs on biblical teachings.



*"We are in a dangerous place when the church is looking to 20-year-old worship singers as our source of truth," he wrote. "We now have a church culture that learns who God is from singing modern praise songs rather than from the teachings of the Word."*

*"Amen, brother! Preach!" (Todd Starnes)*

Charles Spurgeon warned that the time would come when instead of pastors feeding the sheep; the church would be filled with clowns entertaining the goats. That day is here!

## 12. Where Have All the Prophets Gone?

*His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me." -John 2:17*

Zeal is a praiseworthy zeal to preserve something precious.



Figure 6: Source unknown

Q: Have you noticed a dearth of rabble-rousing, street-fighten' holy men duking it out with Marxists in the market place of ideas?

Q Where have men of muscle and might, courage and conviction, iron and steel gone?

Q: Why have rugged Christian men been replaced with "happy-meal" seekers committed to never offending whining pussy-whipped, clean shaven girly feminists that don't know the difference between jam and jelly?

Dr. Sebastian Gorka, former deputy assistant to President Donald Trump, noticed the same dearth of leadership in the military, saying, "political correctness" in today's armed services would prevent the ascendance of historical military leaders such as Dwight Eisenhower, George Patton, and Omar Bradley.

*"We have lost so very, very much in terms of leadership, determination, and just forthrightness," determined Gorka. "Look at the Eisenhowers or the Pattons or the Bradleys. These individuals wouldn't make it past major in today's military, because they would be seen as iconoclasts and too much individuals who are prepared to talk the truth."*

*Political correctness infected our general officer class," estimated*

*Gorka. (Breitbart News. 6/6/2019).*

We don't live in a vacuum. What is true in America's army is true in the Lord's Army.

It seems like Christians are being trained to be sweet, tea-totaling, politically-balanced, inoffensive caretakers in church mausoleums assuring that comatose Christians never come alive for Christ.

No! We are NOT suggesting believers need to fall for pseudo-revival shams common among emotion-seeking church attenders. Rather, we are calling for spiritual testosterone among holy men that stand on the principles of God's Word.

Many Christians are being trained through free speech zones, bubble zones, trespass zones, anti-hate laws, anti-bullying legislation, government zero-tolerance policies, hate crime statutes, and other we're-gonna-control-ya bills passed by state legislatures – bills aimed at discouraging dissent always reminding the people that resistance to tyranny is futile, vain, and illegal . . . that “blue lives matter” . . . that ya need to be good little Christian boys and girls that do everything the government wants.

When Americans are more concerned about being politically correct than Biblically correct they promote the tyranny of the police state.

*“What the architects of the police state want are submissive, compliant, cooperative, obedient, meek citizens who don't talk back, don't challenge government authority, don't speak out against government misconduct, and don't step out of line” (John Whitehead)*

When religious folk protect tyrants working for the government from inconvenience, annoyance or alarm they serve Satan and not our Lord Jesus Christ.

In a free society, said Justice William O. Douglas, the government exists to serve the people, not the other way around.

Douglas went on to declare:

*“Since when have we Americans been expected to bow submissively to authority and speak with awe and reverence to those who represent us?”*

Jesus said, “Woe unto you when all men speak well of you.”

*Conversely, woe unto you plastic pastors when you speak well of evildoers, perverts. Lesbians, queers, IRS thieves, bully cops, baby-killers, legislative tyrants, and trespassers storming this country. Woe unto you when you are silent about lies lurking behind slogans of social justice, equality, and freedom.*

Prophets may fall, break, and fail . . . but true men rise and shine.

Oh, soul,

*“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is raised upon thee” (Isaiah 60:1).*

*“Casting down imaginations (specious reasoning), and every high thing (intellectual presumption) that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5)*

Where have all the prophets gone?

Maybe they are in God’s furnace of affliction being fashioned after Christ.

## 13. Do Church with Dignity and Excellence

*“I am a great King . . .”*

*“ . . . my name shall be great among the gentiles, saith the LORD of hosts . . .”*  
– Malachi 1:11

### A great burden



Figure 7: Unsplash

by accepting inferior, blemished sacrifices offered by the people.

Malachi is called a “burden” from the Lord (1:1). The word “burden” (masa) means “heavy, hard, weighty, or burdensome.”

This message comes from the heavy heart of the LORD God. . . a heart weighed down by the irreverence and disrespect of ancient Israel for Himself. Because they had a shriveled, low view of God, the priests showed contempt for the Lord

Malachi’s message is a corrective to casualness and carelessness of man’s worship of the King of the Nations.

*Malachi 1:5 The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel. . . .*

The word “magnified” (gadal) refers to the intense action of being illuminated . . . of growing bigger and bigger in prominence. God is great! The only question is, “Will men recognize and treat Him as such?”

The preposition “from” should be “above” or “over” Israel — that is, the One who hovers over the nation is greatly magnified . . . and should be revered as majesty.

*1:6 Wherein have we despised thy name?*

This is a question asked by the priests.

The word “despised” (*bazah*) means “contempt, worthless, contemptible, and despicable;” that is, the priests who should have been honoring the LORD as one would a great earthly king were acting carelessly, sloppily, and casually while carrying out the duties of the priesthood. They erred by tolerating inferior, mediocre, substandard sacrifices from the people.

*10 Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand . . .*

This is the remedy for the casual, coffee cup worship church. **Dismiss the service; and Shut the Doors!** It would be better to not have a worship service than do it in a profane, tacky way.

So infectious was the spirit of carelessness that God asks:

Isn't there one man among you that has a standard of excellence . . .  
. . . that recognizes my greatness . . . that despises your half-hearted,  
despicable services, and has the guts to shut the doors of the  
temple?

### A great name

*11 For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen (gowy = Gentiles), saith the LORD of hosts . . .*

*“For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same . . .” refers to distant lands to the east and west or to the sweeping jurisdiction of the LORD.*

The LORD is not just “my God,” or “the God of Israel.” He is “the King of nations” (Jeremiah 10:7); and, His greatness must be acknowledged in word and deed wherever men call upon His name.

Since ancient Israel was God’s “beachhead” for reaching the world, it was the duty of these temple servants to honor His name in all their liturgy and services by following His regulations for temple services.

**14 But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen.**

Worshippers were not permitted to offer females of the flock in a burnt offering . . . if they had a perfect male in the herd. The one pretending to worship God having a perfect male in the flock while offering a ewe (*"corrupt thing"*) is called a *"deceiver"* — a fraudulent hypocrite with no standing before God.

*"Two cases are mentioned. In the first place, that when according to the law a male animal ought to have been sacrificed, the person offering the sacrifice offered a female, i.e., one of less value, under the presence that he did not possess or could not procure a male. The prophet calls this naḵhal, cheating." (K & D)*

So repulsive and unacceptable was this practice of offering the mediocre and inferior animal from the flock, the LORD pronounced a curse on the pretender of worship. Cursed is the man who possesses the best, and then willfully offers Him the ordinary.

The grounds of this expectation of great sacrifices and the curse on deceivers is that God is a great King; The glorious title, *"Great King"* is adopted by the *"LORD of Hosts"* who is *the Captain of "army," "navy," and "marines."*

### **HE is great in Divine attributes**

Great in virtues and glories; in majesty and admiration; in powers and abilities; in knowledge and wisdom; in justice and fairness; in holiness and goodness; in mercy and grace; in love and kindness; in patience and courage; and, in distinction and honor.

Because He is great, He is worthy of the best . . . the finest . . . the rare and precious.

*Who would "dare to offer to a king or to his ruler (Malachi 1:6) anything but the best?" (Ellicott).*

*"My name is dreadful:"* The word *"dreadful"* (*yare'*) is a Niphal stem (passive or reflexive) meaning God will cause His name to be revered among the Gentiles. Terms like dignity, excellence, honor, quality, cherish, esteem, majesty, and worthiness should characterize man's approach to God. In worshiping this Great King churchmen would do well to be mindful of their dress, words, and actions.

*"As God is the great King over all the earth, and will be acknowledged as such among the Gentiles under the gospel, (Malachi 1:11) so men's religious services ought to be performed with a reverence suitable to the greatness of his majesty." (Benson)*

*"He Alone is King, and a King so great, that of His greatness or dignity and perfection there is no end." (Barnes).*

*"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" (Revelation 5:12)*

### **Application**

One has to wonder what this Great King might say to the casual, "Coffee-Cup" church

- About dressing in t-shirts and flip-flops;
- About the poor looking rich and the rich looking poor (James 2).
- About cowboy churches where men wear their ten-gallon hats during the service;
- About women who have more skin showing than a Las Vegas prostitute;
- About church attendants dress in tank tops and short-shorts;
- About song-leaders laugh and giggle between songs;
- About men come dressed in overalls and mechanics vests;
- About where announcements are longer than any liturgical practice of the church;
- About offerings that are truncated and diminished;
- About men sipping on coffee and eating donuts during a service;
- About women preaching and praying and dancing up and down like pogo sticks in church;
- About men muttering "good ol' boys" prayers like hillbillies from the Ozarks;
- About naked women who refuse to wear headcoverings;
- About majestic liturgical prayers being replaced by common, thoughtless, repetitive casual, spontaneous "I"-centered hick prayers;
- About singing glorious hymns that sound more like a funeral dirge;
- About replacing great hymns with modern, senseless, repetitive pop praise-choruses ?

***2 Chronicles 20:21; ". . . he appointed those who were to sing to the Lord and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army. . ."***

*"Worship the Lord in Holy Attire"* (Psalm 96: 8-9). The Hebrew word for "attire" is "hadarah," which means "adornment and glory." When you and I enter as

priests in God's presence, this very act assures our adornment with glory." (Loving Grace Ministries).

**The guide for meeting with the King of Queen of England is as follows:**

*"It is said that in the presence of royalty you should avoid wearing something exposing your arms. Formal dress is recommended. Jeans and trainers will be unacceptable" (Whales online: May 26, 2022).  
"Royal protocol for women's fashion includes no revealing cuts, no wearing black outside of funerals, no bare knees and no heavy make-up – a more natural look is preferable."*

**The protocol to meet the pope stands as follows:**

*"Its basic code is for both men and women both need to cover their knees and upper arms. They prohibit wearing shorts or skirts above the knee, sleeveless tops, and low-cut shirts. Men must take their hats off before entering whereas women may continue wearing theirs."  
"For men, that means a jacket and tie and polished shoes. For women, a nice dress or suit works best – preferably one that covers the arms and has a hemline below the knees." "For women: Shoulders and the décolleté should be covered. Dresses and skirts should fall just below the knee. Shoes should be closed-toe. A black veil or mantilla is recommended. Jewelry should be discreet" (Aleitia). "In very hot weather a shawl or large scarf/Pashmina can be draped around the shoulders for visiting the sites. Bare shoulders and short skirts are not permitted and again come prepared to cover up if wearing shorts. Men should also be aware that hats need to be removed before entering any church or Chapel which includes St Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel" (Papal Audience).*

Since the Lord Jesus Christ is a Great King, let us dress, sing, and speak with excellence about His majesty in public services.

*"my name shall be great among the gentiles, saith the LORD of hosts . . . "*

---

Notes:

**Consider the dress code in Orthodox Churches.**

Ladies – sleeved and non-revealing dress or blouse, respectable fitted clothes and skirt length with head covering

Gentlemen – sleeved and collared shirt, long trousers, coat and tie is preferred with no head covering

Source: <https://armenianchurchsydney.org.au/learning/respectful-traditions-of-the-armenian-church/>

Russian, Greek, and Orthodox churches honor king Jesus with their dress code and the holy attire of the deacons;

**Consider the modern come-as-you are American churches** where people wear golf-shirts, Bermuda-shorts and tank tops.

Why? Possibly, our dress is evidence of our Theology.

## 14. The Sufficiency of Scripture

### Sevenfold Perfection of God's Word

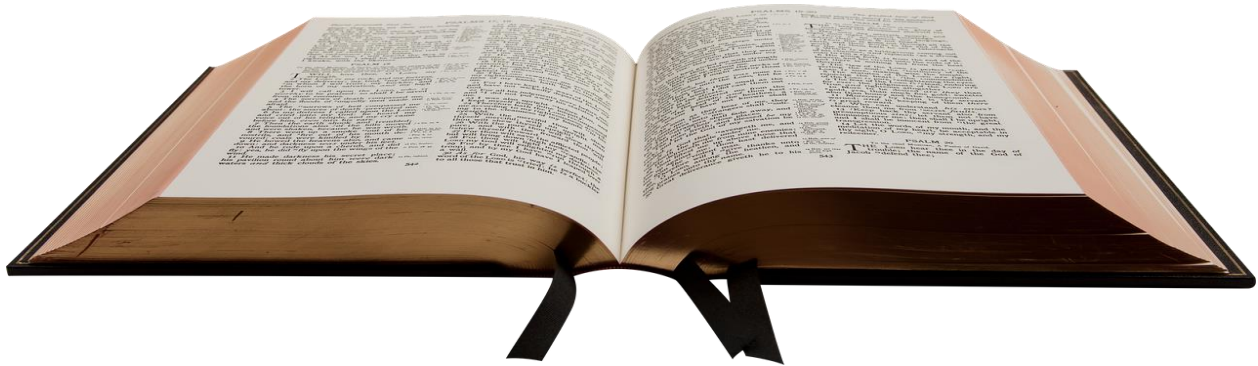


Figure 8: Source unknown

Throughout history men have been in search of authority for what they believe and feel. People have placed their faith in their feeling, personal sensations, dreams, government, church canons, and significant persons in their lives.

In recent times, we see entire churches basing their beliefs on psychology, business success principles, alleged prophetic utterances, self-authenticating experiences, even sayings by movie stars; that is, Christians seldom look to the Bible as their source of authority because they no longer believe in the sufficiency of Scripture.

Observe with me how the inspired psalmist viewed Scripture in his day . . . and, let us do the same.

| <b>TITLE</b> | <b>CHARACTER</b> | <b>BENEFIT</b> |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Law        | Perfect          | Conversion     |



|   |                  |                  |                 |
|---|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 2 | Testimony        | Sure or faithful | Wisdom          |
| 3 | Statutes         | Righteous        | Joy             |
| 4 | Commandment      | Pure/Clear       | Light           |
| 5 | Fear of the Lord | Clean/pure       | Eternal         |
| 6 | Judgments        | True             | Warning (10-12) |
| 7 | Judgments        | Righteous        | Reward (10-12)  |

### PERFECTIONS OF GOD'S WORD

When you have an issue in your life, where do you go to find answers?

Generally speaking, Christians today will seek assistance from a friend, a psychologist, or run down to the local bookstore and look in the "Self Help" section to find a book on self-improvement. However, it was not always this way.

Puritans believed that God's Word was sufficient for all of man's spiritual needs.

Consider the following statements about the virtue of looking to God's Word to find the answer to a spiritual problem you are facing.

(Note: Greek / Hebrew fonts may be unavailable in this internet publication)

***Psalm 19:7 The law (tr;AT, torah) of the LORD is perfect (hm'ymit., taw-meem), converting (tb;yvim, shuv or shuwb) the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.***

The word "law" is the Hebrew word "torah" (tr;ÛAT«). "Torah" is the word the Hebrew community uses to refer to the first five books of the OT. The word "torah" is a general word that refers to God's law, laws, instructions, or body of law. "Torah" refers to the Ten Commandments" (Exodus 24:12) as well as specific instructions on various ceremonies and rituals (Leviticus 6:2). Jesus is the living Torah, the subjective perfection of God's Word. Christendom believed itself to be God's realm because it was governed by the law of God as set forth in the Scriptures. Furthermore, it saw itself as the new Israel of God and no less subject to the moral teachings in Torah. It is a modern heresy that holds that the law of God has no meaning and no binding force today for men and their institutions.

Those who keep the Torah are blessed (Psalm 119:10). It takes understanding to keep God's Torah (Psalm 119:34). It is "wicked" to depart from the Torah (Ps. 119:53; Is. 30:9). Embodied in the word *torah* is the whole concept of the authority of God (Is. 2:3). Unlike humanistic, man-made "statutes" which are spurious and often frivolous, Torah is fully sanctioned by YHWH. Every nation is responsible to the *torahs* of God (Is. 1:10; 24:5; 42:4).

YHWH is the Great Lawgiver, and to depart from Torah is to depart from righteousness.

*Isaiah 33:22 For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us.*

The word “perfect” means “whole or complete or wholesome.” The Bible is the complete revelation of God to man. It began with God speaking to Adam and was completed during the apostolic age shortly after the Son of God appeared in history. Nothing more needs to be added. It is a completed, finished work of inspiration.

Law cannot save the soul, but it can warn sinners of error and turn a person to Christ. The word “converting” comes from the Hebrew word *shuwb* (bWv), a Hiphil participle, which means “to turn,” “to bring back,” or “to refresh.” It is translated “turn” 185 times.

In Genesis 42:5, *shuwb* is translated “restored” in the story of Joseph where Joseph predicted that the chief butler in Pharaoh’s court would be restored to his former position. In Exodus 4:7, Moses’ leprous flesh was turned (*shuwb*) back to normal. In 2 Samuel 14:3 *shuwb* is translated “fetch home again.” David called for Absalom, his estranged son, and brought him home again. In Proverbs 25:13, *shuwb* is translated “refresh” where the text says a good servant refreshes his master. In Ezekiel 14:6 *shuwb* is translated “repent.” When a person repents, he turns from his sin back to God.

David is telling us that the Word of God is complete, and the Hiphil verb (causative) tells us that the Bible has the power to convert the soul. A sinner who will read the Word of God can experience the “new birth” (regeneration). A straying Christian who will read the Word of God can be turned back to Christ because the Word of God can restore the heart.

### **THE WORD OF GOD IS SURE**

*Psalm 19:7b The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.*

Because the Ten Commandments are a witness to the character of God, the word “testimony” refers to the Ten Commandments. The Torah is about God’s law. Because the law is based on the character of God and comes as a direct reflection of the character of God, the law is absolute, unchanging, and immutable (Psalm 119: 137, 138, 142, 144) . “I, the Lord, change not” (Malachi 3:6).

God’s character is the basis of law, of ethics, of right and wrong. To study law is to study theology; to study theology is to study law. The practice of law is none other than applied theology.

The word “sure” (חנ”מ’א/נ<, *aman*) is a Niphal verb implies that the Word of God has been acted upon so that it is made “sure.” The word “sure” means “faithful” or “trustworthy” or “reliable.” The Bible is reliable. It is the canon of truth; i.e., it is a ruler by one can use to measure the truth of any metaphysical claim.

The word *aman* is translated “believe” (Genesis 15:6), “verified” (Genesis 42:20), “amen” (Numbers 5:22, under an oath), “nursing father” (Numbers 11:12), and “faithful” (Numbers 12:7). The Bible can be trusted because it is inspired by a holy, loving God. This cannot be said of sources grounded in psychology and humanistic law.

The word “wise” (כִּ;ח’, *chakam*) is the word for wisdom. It is translated “cunning” ten times (See I Chronicles 22:15 and 2 Chronicles 2:7,14). The word “subtle” is used to describe Jonadab’s plot to rape Tamar. *Chakam* is translated “wise” 102 times in the OT.

The psalmist is saying that the Word of God can make its reader sharp, intelligent, wise, and discerning. Wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord, not a master’s degree in psychology, or a juris doctor’s degree in law by the BAR association (Proverbs 1:7).

### **THE WORD OF GOD IS RIGHTEOUS**

***Psalm 19:8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes***

The word “statutes” (יִדְעוּקִי,, *paqad*) refers to the legal regulations by God established in Israel. Statutes are specific prohibitions against the moral law.

The word “right” (יָשָׁר, *yashar*) is the word “righteousness” or “straight” in Hebrew. It is translated “please” in 2 Chronicles 30:4, “straight” in 2 Chronicles 32:30), “upright” in Job 1:1, and “righteous” in our present text. It means straight or true.

The analogy before us is that of a plumb line used to construct a wall. The Bible is our plumb line for what is right. It is God’s tape measure for measuring right and wrong. It is not only accurate on what it speaks, it is the sufficient guide for morals, ethics, integrity, virtue, and the way to heaven. Only God can define right and wrong, goodness, and evil. When man seeks to define morals, he tolerates evil and condemns truth.

The word “rejoicing” is “*samach*” (שָׂמַח, *ble-yxeM.f;m*), a Piel participle implying intense joyfulness. It is translated “be glad” 34 times in Scripture. It is used of Jonah’s glad heart over the relief he found under the shade of a gourd. In Exodus 4:14, the term is used of Aaron’s joy in seeing Moses after a forty year separation. It is translated “be merry” one time in I Kings 4:20. In the wonderful prosperous times of Solomon’s reign, the people were eating and

drinking and making merry. Want to be happy? Then plunge into the Word of God.

### **THE WORD OF GOD IS PURE**

*Psalm 19:8b "the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes."*

The word "commandment" is the Hebrew word mitzvah (tw:c.m, *mitzvah*), which refers to a code or law given by God. In Leviticus 4:2, a mitzvah is a prohibition to do a thing; that is, when a person does a "thou shall not" he breaks a mitzvah. He injures God or his neighbor.

The word "pure" (hr'B', *bar*) is the word for clean or clear. It is translated "cleanness" in 2 Samuel 22:21 when David talked about clean hands. In law, a person who has clean hands is a person who has not violated a moral principle in dealing with others. The idea here is that God's word is like water that cleanses the eye so a man can see clearly. To often people say, "Well, the Bible is just too hard to understand." This is not true because the Bible is clear on what it says and what it means. If there is a cloud surrounding the Bible, it is in the mind of man.

Because the Bible is pure we must beware of those who want to integrate humanism with Christianity, psychology with theology, and Greek philosophy with the gospel. A cloud in the pulpit produces a fog in the pews.

A teacher asked this question, "What do you get when you cross a chicken with a cow? Answer: eggnog. Well, "What do you get when you cross theology with psychology?" Answer: psychoheresy. The Bible is pure and God's man will not pollute his ministry with the teachings of man.

*Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

The word "enlightening" (tr;yaim, *ore*) means to light up as in when God lit up the universe on the day He set the lights in the sky (Psalm 97:4). It is translated "clear" in Amos 8:19 where Amos speaks of a "clear day." It is translated "shine," "break of day" (2 Samuel 2:32), "kindle," and "set on fire." All these words refer to the giving of light so man can see clearly. The Bible is like water in that it cleanses the eyes. It is like a lamp in that it gives light so the eye can see.

### **THE WORD OF GOD IS CLEAN**

*Psalm 19:9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever:*

The word "fear of the Lord" (hw"hy> ta;r>yl, *yarat Yavah*) is another title for God's Word. Fear is an effect of reading the Torah. A man should be afraid to

disobey His commandments—to offend God or injure one’s neighbor or his property. Fear is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 1:7).

The word “clean” (hr’Ahj, *tawhowr*) means pure and unpolluted. It is translated “clean,” “pure,” and “fair.” It is pure because God’s Word is inspired; that is, straight from God. Though His Word came through sinful men, He superintended its inscription in such a way as to protect its purity. Because it is pure, it has a cleansing effect on those who read it. David could say, “Create in me a clean heart” (Psalm 51:10). A man can be clean by taking the soap of God’s Word and scrubbing his heart with it (Psalm 119:9-11).

Further, God’s Word “endures forever.” Because the Torah is a reflection of God’s character and because God’s character is unchanging and immutable, God’s Word is permanent. Because it “endures forever” it is absolute. Because it is absolute, it perpetuates moral absolutes and cleanses men of the moral relativism that infects this age. As the stars provide light for all ages, the Word God provides eternal light for all time.

### **THE WORD OF GOD IS TRUE**

*Psalm 19:9 . . .the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.*

The Bible is called “the judgments of the LORD.” The Hebrew word for “judgments” is *misphat* (hw”ihy>-yjeP.v.mi()). The Bible is called the *Misphat* of the Lord because the Bible is a record of God’s judicial decisions on what is right and what is wrong. Like a court recorder keeps a record of the judge’s decisions in the court record, the Spirit created the court record of God’s decisions. The word “true” (tm,a/, *’emeth*) refers to something that is firm or faithful. In this case, “true” refers to the faithfulness of God’s Word. In other words, when the Bible speaks on fornication, family, marriage, abortion, or homosexuality, you are engaging truth and righteousness. When Paul addressed Felix on “righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come” he pierced the congested conscience of a governor by using God’s Word.

### **GOD’S WORD IS RIGHTEOUS**

*Psalm 19:9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.*

The Hebrew word for “righteous” is *tsadaq* (qd;c’) and it is different than the word “right” in the previous verse. *Tsadaq* means “just;” that is, it is balanced. Because it is balanced it can meet the needs of every man. No matter what you need, the Bible addresses your concerns. If you need hope, encouragement, comfort, strength, wisdom, or discernment, the Bible can minister to you.

### **THE VALUE OF GOD’S WORD**

*Psalm 19:10-12 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

Having given a sevenfold description of God's Word, the psalmist now estimates its value. It is more valuable than a pot of gold. Throughout history all cultures have esteemed this precious metal as a commodity, as a mineral, and precious object. Terms like "gold fever," "gold rush," "good as gold," "golden anniversary," "The golden years," and "go for the gold" clue us in to the historical interest men have for this shiny object. It has been a symbol of power, wealth and success. It has provoked greed and lust. It has been hoarded and unspent, and it has been spent and dispersed as a man's greatest expression of love. Over gold, brides have been won, and wars have been fought. Man's love for gold and relentless pursuit of this precious metal is well founded in history.

On January 24, 1848, John Sutter smashed a rock that did not break and upon further investigation he discovered the rock was soft and yellow. Gold uncovered its beauty to him. With this chance discovery of a few, small gold nuggets on the American River, everything changed in California. The news spread like wild fire. Men, women, and youth forsook their families and homes and comforts and headed to California. They came from the east coast, Alaska, China, Chili, Mexico, Spain, and Britain in search of gold. They traveled in ships, covered wagons, on horseback, and on foot. They worked 18 hours a day enduring the cold rainy months and the long, hot dry summers. Why? Because of unquenchable lust for gold.

What is your estimation of this Book?

If the Bible is more precious than gold, why do men study scientology, Buddhism, Marx, Freud, Aristotle, Mormonism, Islam or Margaret Sanger to obtain wisdom? Do you view this Book as gold? Silver? Copper? Iron? Rock? Clay? Or common dirt? Are you so infected with gold fever that you've got to mine ore from God's Word every single day, or are you so sick that you can go weeks, months, even years without touching this Book? It is sad to say, but most men will labor forty, sixty, even eighty hours a week in pursuit of literal gold and silver. Most won't spend even five minutes a day pursuing true wealth. Do you have a mine shaft and does your Bible shows signs of digging and scratching for golden nuggets of truth?

Not only is the Word more valuable than gold, it delights the soul more than honey excites the taste buds. Some people don't understand this, but in New Mexico, restaurants will serve sopaipillas and honey for dessert. There is nothing like a hot sopaipillas and some mesquite honey for dessert. It doesn't do much for your waist line, but sopaipillas are so goooooood!! What

sopaipillas and honey are to New Mexicans, the Word of God is to the hungry heart.

Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.

The psalmist informs us of two benefits for studying God's Word. First, the Bible warns (rh'z>n, *zahar*) the man of God of impending danger. As I travel America, I notice road signs like "Deer Crossing" or "Falling Rocks." These signs help us to avoid danger. Like a shofar, God's word announces the advancement of enemies. Like a warning label on cigarette cartons, God's Word warns of moral dangers:

- Beware of false prophets (media personalities) - Matthew 7:15.
- Beware of men (that have government as their god) - Matthew 10:17.
- Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy - Luke 12:1.
- Beware of covetousness (avarice and pornography) - Luke 12:15.
- Beware of scribes [lawyers] - Luke 20:46.
- Beware of dogs; beware of evil workers; beware of concision - Philippians 3:2.
- Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy (Platonism, psychology, evolution) - Colossians 2:8.
- Beware of the error of the wicked (subjectivism) - 2 Peter 3:17.

Second, the Bible rewards. The word "*reward*," (bq,[e, *eqeb*) has the adjective "great" before it, which means "*abundance*" (br) in Hebrew. It is translated by the phrase "*ten thousand*," "*abundance*," "*chief*," "*much*" and "*multitude*." Not only does keeping God's Word have an eternal reward, the Word rushes into our lives with thousands of gifts.

The psalmist ends with a question and a prayer. The psalmist realizes that sin creeps and crawls into our minds, heart, and emotions to infect us. In desperation, he cries out to God for cleansing from the secret, hidden, obscure faults that cripple and defeat us. Only by the Word and prayer can any man ever hope to overcome the sin that so easily besets him.

## 15. The Tragedy of Church Incorporation

## *The Church of Jesus Christ v. a 501 c 3 CHURCH CORPORATION*

There are many more court cases I could cite, and I know all these quotes may be confusing for readers, so let's summarize the points in a simplistic manner:



Figure 9: Freepik

- The creator of a corporation is the State.
  - The State is the sole authority and sovereign over the corporation.
  - The corporation is subject to the laws of the State which limits its powers.
  - The corporation has no constitutionally protected rights.
  - The corporation is an artificial person.
- The corporation submits to a State Charter declaring it is a creature of the State.
  - The corporation is created for the benefit of the public.
  - The corporation is a State franchise.
  - The corporation is a privilege granted by the State.

It's been far too long that pastors, evangelists, deacons, elders, missionaries, and churchgoers have sat in ignorance on this matter, so read this carefully: You have a 501 c 3 INCORPORATED status, which means your church is a CORPORATION of the State, and here is the message that, lawyers, and the IRD are all trying to get you to understand about the contract you signed.

- The creator of your "church" organization is the State.
- The State is the sole authority and sovereign head over your "church."
- Your "church" is subject to the laws of the State which limits its powers.
- Your "church" has no constitutionally protected rights.
- Your "church" submits to a State Charter declaring it is a creature of the State.
- Your "church" is created for the benefit of the public.
- Your "church" is a State franchise.
- Your "church" is a privilege granted by the State.

Note: The word "church" can also be replaced with classification like ministry or mission.

Source: [Creationliberty.com](http://Creationliberty.com)



## **Becoming INCORPORATED is Treason to Christ.**

The tragedy of “church” incorporation is best titled *“Treason to Christ.”*

Statesmen are very concerned about treason to the State, but think nothing of treason to Christ.

The Biblical Foundation of the Bible rests on the dogma that there is One Absolute God with one absolute law order; the central offense is therefore treason to that God by an act of idolatry.

### **Scriptural Authority**

*“I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods (laws) before me.” – Exodus 20:2-3*

*“No man (or church) can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and the State.” - Matthew 6:24*

A church board, often out of ignorance, commits treason to Christ when they incorporate with the State for the following reasons:

1. The Creator of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt. 16:18), but the creator of a “church” corporation is the State; and,
2. The Sole Authority (head) of a church is the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:22), but the sole authority (head) of a “church” corporation is the State; that is, when a church gives up its status under Christ it legally makes the IRS the Head of its “church” Organization which is an act of treason to the King.
3. The church is subject to Christ and His law-order alone (Acts 5:29-32), but a “church” corporation is subject to the laws of the State – laws that limit the powers of the corporation.
4. The church has one Lawgiver (James 4:12), but licensed state “church” corporation has many masters: Federal, IRS, FEMA, State, County, City, and many agencies.
5. The church has “unalienable” rights (Mt. 28:18-20) that are protected the U.S. Constitution (Declaration, 1st Amendment, 9th-10th Amendments), but a “church” corporation has no protected rights . . . only privileges that can be taken away under any so called “emergency” by the swipe of a pen or verbal executive order.
6. The church is the living corpus (body) of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27), but the “church” incorporation is a dead, insentient, artificial, fictional “person” – a creation of law.

7. The church proves its devotion to Christ when it obeys its charter -- the Word of God (1 John 5:3), and a "church" corporation proves it is a creature of the State when it obeys the State Charter.

8. The church is created for the glory of God and the edification of Christians (Eph. 4:12), but a "church" corporation is created for the benefit of the State (public).

9. The church has unlimited resources in Christ go conduct is ministry on earth (1 Cor. 1:8), but a "church" corporation franchise operates by whims and wishes of the State.

10. The church is endowed with all authority (and rights) to conduct its ministry (Mt. 28:19-20), but a "church corporation has no rights. It only has privileges that can be withdrawn at any time by its State Master.

Pastors would do well to get educated on law, and to consider how their 501 c 3 organizations is evidence of treason to Christ.

*"Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together." -  
Deuteronomy 22:10*

*"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: 6 for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" - 2 Corinthians 6:14*

## 16. How to Build a Good Church

### Zechariah 4

*"Not by might . . . but by my Spirit"*

*Zechariah 4:2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:*

*Zechariah 4:5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.*

*Zechariah 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.*

*Zechariah 4:7 Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.*

*Zechariah 4:10 For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.*



The background of this chapter is the restart of the Second Temple in 520 BC under the leadership of Zerubbabel inspired by the preaching of Zachariah and Haggai. It applies to building the church – the living temple of Jesus Christ.

To better understand the marvelous lesson in this chapter observe these seven words:

(1) “*Lord*” (4:5): When the angel asked Zechariah, “Knowest thou not what these be?” he did **not** say, “No Lord,” **but** “*No, my lord.*” “No” and “Lord” never belong together; that is, this vision was addressed to a man who understood Lordship in his own life. Great churches are built by men who have Christ as their Great Architect.

(2) “*Great mountain:*” The temple project was delayed more than a decade due to fierce political opposition in the region. This opposition is called “a great mountain” (4:7) whom God promised would become a level plain like a Babylonian desert. This promise is consistent with other imagery in the Bible:

*Isaiah 40:4 “Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain” Isaiah 40:4.*

*Luke 14:11 “For whoever exalts himself (like a mountain) will be humbled (like a plain), and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

*2 Corinthians 10:405 “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”*

Likewise, there are “*great mountains*” that hinder the building of the church which can be removed by faith (Mark 11).

(3) “*Might*”: The word “*might*” (*cha’yil*) in Zechariah 4:6 is translated “host” or “armies”

*Exodus 14:9 But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army (cha’yil), and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before*

*Baalzephon.*

*Exodus 14:17 And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host (cha'yil), upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.*

The preposition “by” refers to a method of transport or a means to accomplish something.

The implied verb is “build.” The adverb “not” negates the verbal action or the methods that follow indicating the divine purpose is not advanced by human efforts.

“Not by might” is God’s way of informing us His temple is not “cut by human hands” (Daniel 2:34); that is, with human wisdom, planning, money, strategies, eloquence, muscle, cheap tricks, cute sermons and the like.

*Hosea 1:7 Yet I will have mercy on the house of Judah, Will save them by the LORD their God, And will not save them by bow, Nor by sword or battle, by horses or horsemen.”*

Remember, the task before Zerubbabel was not nation building, but building the temple. Nation building requires strong defense; temple building requires a strong spirit.

(4) “My spirit” (4:6): “Not with might” sets in juxtaposition to the “Spirit” of God. The strength of the church rests in its relationship to the Spirit of God, not in its silver and gold, nor in armies and navies.

By “Spirit”, the LORD is **not** addressing human “enthusiasm,” “emotion,” or “ecstatic experiences” common in pseudo revivals where “empty headed” dimwits participate in the fleshly acts of “speaking of tongues,” “slayings of the spirit,” “holy laughter,” or dancing in the isle like fans of a rock star. He is addressing true men and the character of their relationship to the Word of God — a relationship that shows itself in faithfulness to God and quiet, holy service to his fellow man.

“Thus saith the LORD of Host” announces the authority of this revelation. It is not from men, but from the Lord of Armies.

(5) “Bowl:” The imagery before Zechariah is the golden candlestick in the temple with a “bowl” (4:2) above it — a huge bowl filled with olive oil to supply light for the candlestick needed to service temple sacraments. Hebrews were familiar with the temple candelabra, but not the golden “bowl.” Thus, God shows Zechariah the hidden means of building His work — there is a reservoir with an endless supply of oil for an endless supply of light — a symbolic presentation of the means of power to shed light in the darkness —

spirit-filled preachers shedding light on the Word of God to their congregations.

(6) “Grace” (4:7): The “headstone” appears to be the cornerstone on which the entire second temple was constructed. The cornerstone of the church is “*grace upon grace*”: that is, God’s work is not build by men perfecting obedience to every jot and title of the law, but by flawed men laying hold of grace– grace to forgive, grace to confront sin, and grace to obey, and grace to overcome failure after failure.

*1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

(7) “The day of small things” (4:10) is a reference to how the builders of the second temple viewed the work (532 BC) . Compared to Solomon’s temple, Zerubbabel’s temple was modest and meager – a small thing.

*Older men, “that had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes” Ezra 4:12. Though they esteemed the temple reconstruction as “nothing” (Haggai 3:3), God promised “the later glory of this house shall be greater than the former, and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts” (Haggai 2:9).*

He did! In the day of Christ, glory filled the temple. But, as the men of Haggai’s day esteemed the temple project a “small thing,” King Herod and his soldiers esteemed Christ as “nothing” (Luke 23:9).

“The eyes of the Lord”: Yes, the reconstruction project was modest to say the least, but God was in it and that was enough:

*“the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in behalf of those whose heart is perfect toward Him” (2 Chronicles 16:9).*

The great lesson here is that **God uses small things**:

- He took Joseph out of prison and placed him in the palace of Pharaoh;
- He made Saul king when he was “small in his own eyes:” (1 Samuel 15:17); He used a shepherd boy to conquer the Philistine champion;
- God took Daniel out of slavery and made him servant of King Nebuchadnezzar; Jesus the carpenter became the Savior of the World; *piscators* (Lat. for fishermen) became preachers that turned the world upside down.

- The apostle Paul learned “strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:10) because “*God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise*” (1 Corinthians 1:27).

Do you desire to do big things? Become “*small*.” Do you desire to be great? *Become “small*.” Do you desire to be powerful? Become “small” and serve the needs of men:

*“The greatest among you shall be servant of all.” - Matthew 23:11*

*“And she rose and bowed with her face to the ground and said, ‘Behold, your handmaid is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.’” 1 Samuel 25:41*

This chapter is here to show us that the true temple (church) is not built with weapons of war: guns, tanks, armies, navies, marines, Green Beret, trendy female pastors, gadget-addicted techies, or “politically correct” pastors. It is built by God’s grace as the Spirit works in the hearts of His servants.

Believers would do well to remember that the true church is not built by fashionable trends common to the “Casual Coffee Cup” Christians in the “Urban Donut Church.” It is built by manly men motivated by grace preaching the “foolishness of the cross” while filled with the Spirit (1 Corinthians 1:18; Ephesians 5:18).

*Cruci Dum Spiro Fido*

## 17. Rules for Church Meetings

### 1 Corinthians 14



Figure 10: Unsplash

As the gospel was preached, New Testament churches cropped up all over the Roman Empire.

These assemblies of believers were not as rigidly organized as modern churches with their professional pastors, liturgies, order of services, and the like. They felt more like a “free-for-all” than a planned, orchestrated worship service we are familiar with in today’s world.

In some cases, churches behaved like a third-grade classrooms where students pop up and down and speak without permission to talk.

Consequently, Paul, as the church planter, had to set down some basic rules to bring order and integrity to this gathering of believers.

### **The Problem of Disorder in the Church**

*1 Corinthians 14:23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad (mainomal)?*

The Corinthian church, a multilingual, multiethnic body of believers was very much alive and glowing. These Christians were excited about coming together and to share with others what God was doing in their lives and what the Lord had taught them that week. A gifted church, the people were motivated to exercise their gifts; that is, these people were not “spectators” being entertained, but co-participants in the worship service.

With so many wanting to speak in their native tongue (*glossa* – a Mediterranean language), meetings tended to be long and confusing. This disorderly practice, however, could bring criticism from visitors who might conclude the saints were crazy (*mainomal* – not in their right mind).

As the apostle listened to reports about the progress of the church in Corinth, he identified practices in the assembly that needed to be corrected. Paul needed to lay down some simple rules that would bring order to the church so the purpose of gathering could be achieved.

These rules apply when the “the whole church be come together into one place” and do not necessarily apply to auxiliary meetings, mission teams, or home Bible studies.

### **The Goal of all Church Meetings**

*24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:*

The word “*prophesy*” (*propheteuo*) had more to do with sharing “the mind of God” (Scripture) with conviction, certainty, and clarity than “predicting” the future.

That there are prophets / prophetesses today that can predict the future is a cultic movement within the culture associated with the divining cults who desire to control the future. Such claims among Christians merits a forceful challenge.

“Convinced of all, he is judged of all:” As a spirit-filled man shared the Word of God, the assembly would listen to see if his perceptions were accurate and relevant. In so doing, God was glorified, and the audience was edified.

*25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.*

A marvelous mark of Christianity compared to other religions is that the Word of God addresses issues and concerns common to all men throughout time; that is, it does not contain esoteric, cabalistic mysteries common to the cults.

As history testifies, wherever the gospel is clearly preached, men fall down on their “face” metaphorically speaking, and worship the one true God.

**Rule One: All activities in the church service must be done for the purpose of edifying the church.**

*26 How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.*

The actions taking place in this church are mentioned here: “hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, and hath an interpretation.”

A church meeting can become bogged down and undisciplined if everyone in the church has an announcement, a report, a favorite song they want sung, a liturgy to read, and a Bible thought to share.

“*Let all things be done unto edifying*” demands order and discipline. Churches must limit the number of speakers, announcements, and reports so that the main purpose of gathering (edification) can be achieved. An over enthusiastic, detailed announcement maker for a small church can dominate a meeting and severely intrude on the pastor’s sermon time which he has spent all week preparing. Churches are not in place to share announcements, but to hear the Word of God.

**Rule 2: The number of participants in a church service must be limited so that people are truly edified and not burdened down by multiple agendas.**

*27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret*

The problem that needed to be addressed was the multilingual character of this seaport community. The process of translating and interpreting every message / report to each ethnic groups bogged down the service testing everyone’s patience.

The remedy for this multi-lingual community was not censorship but order that comes by limiting participation. Paul did not try to limit the needed translation work, but to limit the number of speakers in the church. Individual, peripheral concerns had to be eliminated because the clutter of personal interest bogged down the church. The rule of silence had to be applied to church gathers. Not everyone should be speaking, but everyone should be listening.



**Rule 3: If there is no interpreter, the preacher must remain silent.**

*28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.*

If edification is the objective, then speakers must speak in the native tongue of the congregation unless there is a competent translator present. If there is no translator present, silence is the order of the day for that sanguine man.

Church is a place where men and women can silently speak to God. God hears the prayers and wishes of the silent.

Rule 4: Limit the number of preachers, and let the audience remain silent.

*29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.*

The Biblical word for preacher or teacher is the term “prophet” — a relevant term for the apostles transitioning out of geo-political Israel to establish New Testament ecclesia’s (assemblies) or “the new Israel” also called the church or temple of God.

NT assemblies were privileged to have more than one gifted man who studied the Word. As blessed as these churches are, the church must limit the number of speakers and the rest of the congregation must remain silent while the speaker(s) delivers his message.

Modern churches tend to excel in this rule of order.

**Rule 5: Those church members with an impromptu, relevant thought must remain silent and not interrupt the main speaker.**

*30 If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.*

In this passage, the Apostle teaches this “jack-in-the-box” congregation to be courteous and not to interrupt the presenter.

**Rule 6: The church must develop a procedure for congregational participation, but in an orderly, sensible manner.**

*31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.*

This is a warning against over regulating a church. All member of the church are important and should be given an opportunity to utilize their gift for the edification and comfort of all.

**Rule 7: Exercising self-control and silence is the duty of all members of a church.**

*32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.*

While individuals may feel their message to the congregation is of the Spirit and relevant to the topic discussed, they must also feel the duty to exercise self-control and be silent.

*33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*

In case people did not understand the rules of order, Paul reminds this enthusiastic congregation of Biblical theology — that God is not the author of confusion but of peace; that is, if there is disorder and chaos taking place in a church, it is not of God.

**Rule 8: Women must remain silent.**

*34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.*

While this rule is a disturbing for those trained in the secular feminist movement, it is nevertheless God's imperative for churches.

This rule has its foundation in the Old Testament that orders men to lead and disallows women to rule over their husbands (Genesis 3:16). This command by the Apostle addresses the curse – the nature of women to take control.

Eve was the agent of sin in the original creation and her fruit does not fall far from the tree. Consequently, God did not appoint women to be kings, priests, or hold the office of a prophet in ancient Israel. These rules are carried over into the church, the new Israel of God to keep estrogen out of the pulpit. God calls men to lead in the family, church, and nation. Neglectful men and dominate women fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

While sisters are often the best servants in a church, God limits their ministry to other women and children – that 2/3rds of the church. Women are not permitted to teach men or exercise authority over adult males IN THE CHURCH. Moreover, they are commanded to wear a headcovering as a symbol they, along with the whole church, recognize God's law order as it pertains to the roles for men and women in the family and church. (See 1 Corinthians 11; Ephesians 5:24; and 1 Timothy 2:8ff).

If this rule is not satisfactory, consider the fact that God requires most men in the church to be silent. In fact, in Timothy 2:8, Paul limits male participation in the duties of prayer to holy men.

Paul does not address exceptions to the rule of silence because he is squashing disorder and setting down rules for general church order. The rule of silence for women is not absolute nor is it the law of the Medes and Persians.

There is a place for a women's testimony and, or mission reports where it would be appropriate for a women to share the progress of the gospel in a given mission. But there is no place for disruption of a service to satisfy a woman's curiosity, or a man's for that matter, over a doctrinal issue.

**Rule 9: Women are to reserve their questions and save them for their husbands at home.**

*35 And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.*

Ask any lecturer and they will tell you they save the question time to the end of their seminar because spurious questions (1) disrupt the lecture, and because (2) most questions will be answered by listening to the lecture.

The apostle is laying down rules for church services. *The main rule that establishes order is silence:* silence for the majority of the congregation; silence for the majority of men in the congregation; silence for men with a prophetic gift pressing for exercise; and, silence for women. Silence is a courtesy Christians extend to the preacher so the body can be built up in the faith.

Furthermore, it is our task to understand the spirit of the law and not the letter of the law. In no way is the Apostle attempting to belittle women or hinder their growth. Growth comes by listening, not by talking.

He is not laying down this rule because women are inferior to men, or because men are more talented at speaking than women, but because God wants men and women to accept their roles as God's will for their pilgrimage here on earth. Disorder in a church hinders that purpose. Women leading hinder God's plan for the sexes.

*36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? 37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*

In case any might accuse Paul of being a first-century misogynist, he reminds the church that these rules are the commandments of the Lord applicable to all churches during the Christian era. Paul doesn't hate women nor is he trying to frustrate gifted men. He is a man of God being faithful to the law of God — laws that require men to lead and women to follow.

*38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.*

Some men and some women prefer to be ignorant of God's law-order. If they are willfully ignorant, let them be ignoramuses say the Apostle. "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink."

Q: What if a woman has a theology degree and has been trained to be a pastoreess?

Answer: Resign! The apostle said, "Let your women keep silence in the churches!"

Q: What if my husband isn't very spiritual and doesn't know the Word of God?

Answer: Sadly, this is too often the case. Nevertheless, just do it: 'if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home" humbly and respectfully.

Consider the problems that have arisen since the Women's Suffrage Movement in the 1920's.

The following problems rightfully deserve to be laid at the feet of male and female feminists: voting, rising hem lines, split families, divorce, teen pregnancy, abortion, AIDS, pornography, women forced into the work place, loss of income for males, lesbianism, transvestism, delinquency, teen suicide, and the like.

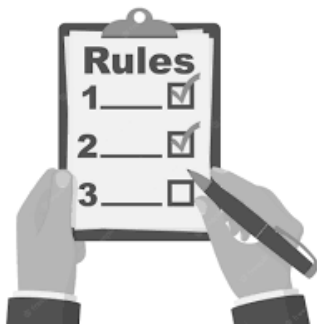
But, God's law-order will be restored to the family and church, and when it is, many of these social problems will disappear in Christian families and churches.

Until then, let us commit ourselves to the edification of the church.

## 18. Rules for the Church from 1 Timothy

### 1 Timothy 3:15

#### Rules for Christ's Church



I went to a small, country church a while back where a man stood up to preach dressed in a t-shirt, sandals, and work jeans. Later, someone told me he was their "pastor." I asked one of the women after the service why she attended this "church organization." She replied, "Because there are no rules?" What? I responded. Even God has at least Ten Rules!" She looked puzzled.

In 1 Timothy, Paul instructed his disciple on the rules for godly conduct in the church of Jesus Christ.

*1 Timothy 3:15*

*But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God,*

*1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. the pillar and ground of the truth.*

This is the purpose of Paul's letter to Timothy is to lay down household rules that men must follow when entering the "House of God." Ever home has rules and God's House is no different. When entering the palace of the King, men MUST know the rules. After all, He is the King of kings.

The term "*church*" refers to a congregation of believers who come together for teaching, prayer, breaking of bread, and fellowship (Acts 2:42).

The "*house of God*" would be a church gathering, not a church building. Four nouns describe this community of believers: house of God, church, pillar, ground of truth.

Paul informs Timothy of his purpose in writing his letter: "*that thou mayest know,*" a hina clause with a subjunctive holding out the possibility that Timothy and his readers might come to a full knowledge on how men "ought" (de) to behave themselves "in the house of God."

The word "*know*" (*eido*) means "to perceive with the eyes." Men building the apparatus of the church must possess knowledge and teach men how to "*worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness*" (Psalm 96:9).

The term "*ought*" (*dei*) means "*must.*" It expresses what is necessary.

The word "*behave*" (*anastrepho*) means "turn up side down, overturn, to turn back, to re-arrange." That is, when men plan to enter God's House after being in the work place, they must go home, do an about-face, clean up, turn over, change clothes, dress appropriately in order to meet with the King and His people for worship. Church picnics operate under a different set of rules.

By describing the church "*as the pillar and ground of truth*", Paul informs us that the local church is the steward of the gospel and Holy Scripture. School and universities are NOT a pillar of truth. Rather, they are the storage dumps that shelve the doctrines of devils.

The nouns "*pillar*" and "*truth*" lack the definite article because the apostle is highlighting the quality and superlative value of the local church.

The reason Paul established rules for decorum is because "great is the mystery of godliness."

The Greek words "*godly*" or "*godliness*" is mentioned ten times in 1 Timothy. When applied to men, it refers to Christ-like conduct and decorum. God, not

man, is the standard for men's conduct. Godliness is the standard for all conduct and decorum. But, the challenged that faced Timothy is that mankind's interest in godliness is like skinny on a fat lady.

These rules are not theories but pragmatics of the early church. By "*pragmatics*" (*pragmateuomai*) we do not mean "*what works*" but what practices honor the Lord. "Occupy" (*pragmateuomai*) till I come," said Jesus.

## **The First Rule for the Church**

### **Pray for All Men**

*1 Timothy 2:1-3 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;*

The verb "*exhort*" is for Timothy (1:18) to establish the rule of prayer in churches so kingdom citizens can fulfill religious obligations of supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men, kings, and all in authority.

"*First of all*" is a reference to the rules and duties of the church. Prayer is the first duty of public worship.

Some grammarians try to establish sharp distinctions between the following terms, but the effort may be futile as these sacerdotal duties are do closely intertwined. Nevertheless, the following is offered for consideration:

The word "*supplications*" (*deasis*) refers to the soul's occupation with specific human needs that people have during the course of life. Whitby thinks "*deprecations* are for the pardon of sin, and averting divine judgments."

"*Prayers*" (*proseuche*) refers to the soul's occupation with religious duty, worship, petitions, blessing, and praising God; "for the obtaining of all spiritual and temporal blessings" (Benson)

"*Intercession*" (*enteuxis*) refers to the soul's occupation for mediation regarding people's serious troubles, conflicts, sins, and the burdens: "addresses presented to God for the salvation of others" (Benson).

"*Thanksgiving*" (*eurcharistias*) refer's to the soul's occupation with its blessings and the benefits of living under the care of our Heavenly Father.

Benson: "*supplications* — To prevent evil; *prayers* — To procure good; *intercessions* — On behalf of others; and *giving of thanks* — For mercies received; *be made for all men* — Chiefly in public

Three subjects / objects of prayer are mentioned: all men, kings, and all those in authority; that is, prayer is concerned about the spiritual and physical needs these people: needs for provision, morality, salvation, character, self-restraint, strength, protection, and wisdom.

“*All men*” need prayer . . . mercy . . . salvation! “*All*” includes friends and enemies, those near and those far, the likable and unlikable.

“*Kings*” refers to those who sit on the throne of state power; those “*in authority*” refer to officers in the apparatus of government.

The greatest need of men (*anthropos*) is to have their eyes open so they can see God’s work of salvation in Christ.

The greatest work is that of praying that “all men (*anthropos*—men and women) to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

The greatest threat to God’s work are “*principalities (arche) and powers (exousia)*” that presumptively possess imperialistic jurisdiction over God’s work; that seek total dominion over the total man for total time; that compete with God for the affections of men. Some rulers need wisdom; others need protection; many need constriction, most need a spirit of self-restraint to just leave believers alone and let them do their work (evangelism) for the Lord without government regulation and sanction.

The purpose of prayer is not that government employees may have peace, but that Christians may be able to conduct their work in peace without harassment from the State.

The word “*quiet*” (*eremos*) means “still and tranquil” which is the opposite of kinetic religion.

Likewise the term “*peaceful*” (*hesuchios*) refers to inner calm, tranquility — the opposite of being locomotive irritation. Service to God in prayer must flow from a calm heart and a rational mind.

The word “*honesty*” (*semnotes*) refers to a life of honor, dignity, seriousness, respectability, and “time-honored” character. Trench says the term is relate to gravity (*gravitos*) or those cherished values that have real weight. It is the opposite of casualness and carelessness. It applies to inward character as well as to outward deportment and attire.

“*Good and acceptable:*” Prayer is like a contract with an offer and acceptance. Prayer offered for all kinds and conditions of men is good and acceptable before God — something to claim after every prayer. When we pray we go before the throne of grace. Because our petitions are taken before a throne, we know that our Lord has the power and resources to grant our prayers; because

it is a throne of grace, we have the confidence that the weaknesses of our person, and the weakness of our prayers will be overlooked.

Prayers are not offered to a reluctant God, but to a willing God who desires the salvation of all men . . . all kings . . . and all officials in government service.

Prayers offered with the sweet incense of Christ seem to have great power because He is the Mediator between God and Man Who gave Himself as a ransom for all.

## **The Second Rule for the Church**

### **Select Qualified Men to Lead in Public Prayer**

*2:8 I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.*

The word "I will" (*Bou,lomai*) does not refer to Paul's personal feelings, preferences, or desires. "*I will*" refers to God's will by virtue of Paul's commission to be a preacher, apostle, and a teacher of the faith among the nations (2:7). In other words, his instruction to Timothy is ordained by the will of God through Paul's apostolic authority. They are the "commandments of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 14:37).

The word "*therefore*" (*ou=n*) refers back to Paul's earlier instructions that prayer be the main priority of the church (2:1-5).

The word "*men*" is **not** "*anthropos*" but "*andros*." The word "*anthropos*" is generic term referring to all mankind which includes men and women. But, the word "*andros*" refers exclusively to the male population in the church; i.e., to men or males. Paul instructs the church to appoint qualified males to lead the church in public prayer. Women are excluded from this duty. But, so are many of the men. Not just any man may pray. Paul restricts the duty of prayer to qualified men.

There are **four qualifications** for leadership in public prayer:

**First**, the duty to lead in prayer is assigned to men (not women);

**Second**, the duty of prayer is limited to holy men (lifting up holy hands);

**Third**, the duty of prayer is limited to happy men (without anger); and

**Fourth**, the duty of prayer is limited to hopeful men (without doubting). The word "*doubting*" is the Greek word "*dialogismou*." It means to "slice through" or "to speak through," or "to slice through an argument." We get our term "dialog" from this word. In this context, Paul eliminates contentious, dubious men from praying. Prayer requires faith and hope.



When it comes to prayer, women are forbidden to lead the congregation in prayer. That duty falls to men, but not just any men. Those who lead the congregation in prayer must be holy, happy, and hopeful.

### **The Third Rule for the Church**

#### **Dress with Dignity**

#### **The Rule for Women**

*2:9 In like manner also, that women adorn (kosmos) themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; {broided: or, plaited} 2:10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*

The phrase, “*In like manner*” (w`sau,tws), is an adverb modifying the main verb in verse eight, “*I will*” (bou,lomai). Paul is not saying, “Just as I want men to pray, I want women to pray.” Rather, Paul is saying, “Just as I have instructions for the men in the church (Rule 2), I also have instructions for the women in the church” (Rule 3).

The infinitive “*to adorn*” (kosmos) should be immediately connected to the main verb “*I will*” in verse 8: “I will (2:8) that women adorn themselves (2:9) . . .”

The word “adorn” (kosmi,w|) means “to arrange or to adorn.” We get the word “cosmos” and “cosmopolitan” from this term. Woman in every age have been concerned about how they look in public. He is not telling the women “to dress down” or not be concerned about their dress. He is telling them to adorn themselves appropriately.

By using the word “*apparel*” (katastolh/|), Paul instructs woman about their external vestments. The word “apparel” is modified by the Greek adjective (kosmi,w|) which is related to the infinitive “to adorn” (kosmei/n). It should be translated “respectable.” Women are to wear appropriate, feminine, respectable apparel in church . . . and all activities. Modest dresses and skirts is appropriate in every age.

Two genitives (of in English) follow defining what Paul means by respectable. The first word “shamefacedness” (aivdou/j) is a noun meaning “modest.” Modesty is the opposite of “sexy” or “revealing.”

The phrase “*not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments*” addresses the opposite challenge of deportment and that is fashion extravagance. God wants women to dress nicely but not “*fit to kill*.”[1] Clothing fashions is very much a theological issue. People dress according to their religious beliefs whether those beliefs be right or wrong. Dressing in gray like a mummy from head to toe, or transgender clothing, or unisex clothing wherein a woman looks like a man is not appropriate dress.[2]

The second word "*propriety*" (swfrosu,nh) expresses the apostle's concern about the woman's attitude about dress. It can be translated "*sobriety*" or "*self-control*," and it refers to the internal, orderly arrangement of a woman's mental and emotional state. The term "*good works/deeds*" identifies a godly woman's behavior. Paul is concerned about the *kosmos* of the outer woman (modest dress), and the *kosmos* of the inner woman (*propriety*), and her public behavior (*good works*). Real beauty (*godliness*) begins in the heart (*propriety*), projects itself in physical appearance (adornment), and expresses itself by good deeds (behavior).

Paul is not telling the women to "dress down" or to hide their femininity, but to arrange themselves appropriately as a Christian woman in the assembly of the church. When attending a public assembly of God's people, women should adorn themselves respectfully and modestly, i.e., they are to be appropriately covered, not "under dressed" (without modesty) or "overdressed" (with gold and pearl-braided hair and costly clothing). Because male attraction to the opposite sex has a long established historic tradition, "dressing way up" or "dressing way down" can take the focus off Christ and place it where it does not belong, on women as women.

This instruction is for those "*who profess godliness*" and demonstrate it by their good works. The context of application is the church, not the workplace. How a woman dresses at work, or in recreation, may be different than how she dresses in a public meeting of the church. But, even here she should seek to dress appropriately for the occasion.[3]

### **The Rule for Men**

***3:10 A bishop (male episcopos) then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour (kosmos), given to hospitality, apt to teach;***

The context of this text is Paul's qualifications (rules) for leaders in the church. This section addresses the standards of elders and deacons that all men should aspire to attain.

The English term "*good behavior*" is a translation of the Greek word "*kosmos*." We get the word "*cosmology*," "*cosmopolitan*" and "*cosmetics*" from this Greek word. It has to do with the respectful manners and attire of a holy man. A man representing Christ must be godly while reflecting good taste and propriety in his dress and decorum. Virtues like dignity, honor, decency, and excellence are closely associated with the *kosmos* of a holy man serving the King of kings, and the Lord of lords (1:17; 6:15).

The opposite of godly decorum is "dressing down" in a casual, sloppy, or careless way. A man coming to church looking like he just finished milking the cow and plowing the back forty dishonors the King.

#### **Fourth Rule for the church**

Let your women be **silent**

*2:11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.*

Paul continues his instructions on how men and women ought to behave in the church.

The word “*learn*” (manqane,tw) is a present, active, imperative verb implying continuous durative action, and should be translated, “Let a woman learn in . . .”

We get the word “*disciple*” from the noun form of this word. Church should be a place of instruction about the gospel (1:10) and about Scripture (4:15). Women are to assume the role of a disciple in the church of Christ.

The phrases “*in silence*” and “*in subjection*” are prepositional phrases describing either the environment of her learning or the instrument of learning.

Women are to learn “*in silence?* (h`suci,a). The word means just what it says, “*silence*” or “*quietness.*”

In Paul’s defense (Acts 22:22) before the crowd at Jerusalem, the crowd became quiet (h`suci,an) when they heard Paul speak in Hebrew.

In other words, Paul wants women to be quiet like this crowd when the pastor speaks. Women are also to learn “*in all subjection.*”

The word “*subjection*” (u`potagh) is a military term meaning “*to arrange oneself under a superior.*” Though the context is not military service, the thought is discerning, agape submission to pastoral leadership.

The adjective “*all*” (pa,sh|) defines “*subjection,*” that is, there are no exceptions. Feminists hate the term “*submission,*” but it is a Biblical word and godly women will pursue its requirements.

#### **Fifth Rule for the Church**

Women are not permitted to teach men.

*2:12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*

The verb “*I suffer not*” (evpitre,pw) should be translated, “*I do not permit.*” This verb is in the indicative, the mood of reality.[4]

The use of “*I*” is not Paul the male-chauvinist-rabbi speaking, but Paul the apostle-not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead (2:7)!

What is it the apostle does not permit? *"I do not permit a woman to teach or to usurp authority over the man."*

The word *"teach"* is the Greek infinitive *"dida,skein."* meaning the act of teaching. The word *"usurp"* comes from the Greek word *"auvqentei/n."* Originally, *auvqentei/n* meant *"to kill a man."* Later, it came to mean *"having absolute authority over a man."* [5] Two negatives are used in the verse (*ouvk* and *ouvde.*). The negative forbids the action of teaching or the exercising the authority over males in some pastoral function.

The phrase *"over men"* should be translated *"of men"* (a genitive). That is, *"I do not permit a woman to teach or to have the authority of men"* in the church.

Women should be in a learning role in the assembly of God's people, not in a teaching role where men are present. This does not mean, however, women cannot teach other women, teach the youth in a church, or hold a staff position in a church.

Paul expects women to disciple other women and to teach their children (Titus 2:2-5); i.e., gifted women have a responsibility to teach two-thirds of the church—other women and the children. But, God has not given our lovely sisters the responsibility to pastor a congregation. A woman who takes on the role of a pastor is in rebellion against God's law-order; and, a congregation who calls a woman to preach has commits apostasy. Men must be disciplined by other qualified men, not by women. Likewise, it is best if women disciple women in the order of Titus 2:3-5.

This restriction on teaching males publically does not mean that a women has nothing to teach men or that in common communication a women cannot speak her mind or give her opinion on a subject. God forbid! Godly sisters have helped many a man from straying from the truth. But, it does eliminate any possibility of a women being a pastor/teacher in any church in the world that names the Name of Christ.

### **Sixth Rule for Church**

#### **Pastor / teachers must strive to meet the standards of godly leadership**

*3:1-7 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless . . . the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach . . . For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? . . . Not a novice, . . ."*

*"True saying"* is Paul's way of authoritatively setting up standards a churchman must attain before he performs pastoral duties in the church. The following marks of maturity are found in the person and character of Christ.

While many men have “spiritual drives,” business men, plumbers, engineers, and other novices turned pastor are not qualified to hold the office of overseer. It takes years of training, discipline, study and preparation to hold the office of a pastor. If you are new to the ministry, it is better to call yourself a minister or apprentice in training than to accept the label “pastor.”

Because godliness is the mark of maturity, all churchmen would do well to make these conventions the ambition of their life. And, the church would do well to wait and pray than to lay hands suddenly on an unqualified man (ordination – 5:22).

### **Seventh Rule for the Church**

#### **The man-pastor must guard himself and teach sound doctrine**

*4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart (apostasy) from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

Paul explains the reason for establishing the rules of the church. He dedicates a whole chapter to instructing Timothy on the necessity of grounding a church on the authority of Scripture.

Knowing, reading, reciting, studying, and guarding the pillars of the gospel is essential because of the spirit of apostasy at work in every age.

“*The Spirit speaketh expressly*” raises the question when did the Spirit reveal this? It is not in the Old Testament nor is such a departure from the faith in the gospels. Apparently, the Spirit revealed this to Paul before he wrote this letter.

The adverb “*expressly*” (rhetos) means directly and specifically; that is, the Spirit spoke to Paul directly and specifically. That the Spirit speaks “*expressly*” to men and women in our time after the formation of the canon is part of the apostasy of our time.

“*In the latter times*” refers to all the ages prior to the return of Christ. Who is qualified to say that we are living in the last days of the latter times?

“*Shall depart from the faith*” references a period of apostasy that will take place before the return of the Lord.

The word “*apostasy*” (aphistami) refers to a dangerous departure from the faith. The apostle is not addressing doctrinal error, differing doctrinal positions, struggles with the faith, backsliding, or leaving one denomination to go to another . . . but leaving the faith to join a different religion — a religion organized around “*seducing spirits*” and “*doctrines of devils.*” Can you hear the snake’s hissing and the Devil’s duplicity here? The doctrines of evolution, reincarnation, communism, LGBTQ+ “*marriage,*” feminism, abortion, homosexuality, and gender-bender teachings come to mind.

"The faith" – the word faith carries with it the definite article to identify "the Christian faith" or "the gospel." Leaving "the faith" to go to "another faith" is apostasy. See the Greek adjective *heteros* (another) in Galatian 1:6).

The adjective pronoun "some" (*tives*) is an indefinite pronoun connected with apostasy referring to a minor few and not a major movement out of "the faith."

It is impossible to list all the ways men can depart from the faith, but Paul lists a few of the "lies" coming from "hypocrites" (Stoics, Gnostics, Ascetics) in his times: abstinence from marriage and certain "meats" of the day.

#### **4:11 *These things command and teach.***

Paul requires Timothy to establish these rules dogmatically and accurately by giving him two imperatives: "command" and "teach."

"These things" refers to the gospel and its pragmatic rules for godliness in the church – an accusative pronoun hemmed in between the two imperatives.

#### **4: 16 *Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.***

"Take heed" (*epecho*) is an imperative in the emphatic position, a powerful, direct command. It means "to pay close attention to," "to watch," "to guard yourself," and "to hold" to this duty.

Two indirect objects are mentioned: "thyself" and "doctrine."

The indirect object (dative) answers the question, "take heed to what?" The second imperative is also a present, active imperative indicating that "taking heed" to personal and doctrinal integrity is not a onetime event, but a constant, ongoing, everyday duty.

The apostle required Timothy to apply the pragmatics (practices) of the gospel FIRST to himself, and secondly to the church because the subtleties of sin and apostasy are always at work in the man. The salesman selling fruits from the Poisonous Tree knocks on the minister's door every day.

Therefore, his ministry must be firmly grounded on Sola Scriptura – the authority of the Holy Scriptures (4: 9, 13, 16); that is, he must continually add fuel to the fire to remain in the faith.

A Bible teacher must study the Word hours a day to "take heed" to "doctrine" (*didakalia*) and to insure that it is within the boundaries of the Christian faith. In so doing, the minister will save himself and others from the apostasy mentioned in 4:1.

There are other church rules in 1 Timothy for governing a church, and pastors would do well to discover them.

## 19. Fastest Growing Religion in the World

*“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” – 1 Timothy 3:16*

Did you know that Christianity is the fastest growing religion in the world?

While Christians have lost their “snap, crackle, and pop” in America, it is not so around the world.

Christianity is alive and vibrant. It not only survives but thrives in countries where Christianity is not subject to government 501 c 3 regulations and where pastors are not holding flowers and dripping with honey.

Consider the following:

### **Megashift**

*“This book is one of the most popular titles ever in the WND Superstore,” said Joseph Farah, founder of WND. “In fact, it has been so big for so long that we got permission from the author to reprint it and make it available exclusively at WND.”*

If you have not already heard about the biggest religious movement in over 1500 years, you will – very soon.

It’s the fastest-growing faith on the planet.

And it’s not Islam.

Millions of miracles and an explosion of small, Spirit-powered churches are heralding this “Megashift” in Christianity, which has been described as a “vast, cleansing storm” coming to American from abroad.

This biblically-inspired, evangelical Christianity is sweeping through places like China, Africa, India and Southeast Asia – making it, by far, the fastest growing faith on the planet.

In “Megashift,” author Jim Rutz coins a new phrase to define this fast-growing segment of the population. He calls them “core apostolics” – or “the new saints who are at the heart of the mushrooming kingdom of God.”

[The classic bestseller “Megashift” has just been republished and is now available from WND Books. [Click here to order your copy today!](#)]

Rutz makes the point that Christianity is overlooked as the fastest-growing faith in the world because most surveys look at the traditional Protestant

denominations and the Roman Catholic Church while ignoring Christian believers who have no part of either.

He says there are 707 million “switched-on disciples” who fit into this new category and that this “church” is exploding in growth.

*“The growing core of Christianity crosses theological lines and includes 707 million born-again people who are increasing by 8 percent a year,” he says.*

So fast is this group growing that, under current trends, according to Rutz, the entire world will be composed of such believers by the year 2032.

“There will be pockets of resistance and unforeseen breakthroughs,” writes Rutz in “Megashift”. “Still, at the rate we’re growing now, to be comically precise, there would be more Christians than people by the autumn of 2032, about 8.2 billion.”

According to the author, until 1960, Western evangelicals outnumbered non-Western evangelicals – mostly Latinos, blacks and Asians – by two to one. As of 2000, non-Western evangelicals outnumbered Westerners by four to one. That moved to seven to one this year.

*“There are now more missionaries sent from non-Western nations than Western nations,” he writes.*

This trend, says Rutz, has been missed by Westerners because the explosive growth is elsewhere.

Hundreds of millions of these Christians are simply not associated with the institutional churches at all. They meet in homes. They meet underground. They meet in caves. They meet, he says, in secret.

And what is driving this movement?

Miracles, he says.

*“Megashift” attempts to document myriad healings and other powerful answers to the sincere prayers of this new category of believer, including, believe it or not, hundreds of dramatic cases of resurrections – not near-death experiences, but real resurrections of actual corpses.*

*“When I was a kid in Sunday school, I was really impressed that 3,000 people were saved on the Day of Pentecost,” he writes. “I thought, ‘Wow, that’ll never happen again!’”*

But, Rutz says, it now happens around the globe every 25 minutes.

*“By tomorrow, there will be 175,000 more Christians than there are today,” he writes.*



The essence of “Megashift” is about how Western Christians can tap into what he sees as a mighty work of God on Earth.

*“Very few people realize the nature of life on Earth is going through a major change,” he writes. “We are seeing a megashift in the basic direction of human history. Until our time, the ancient war between good and evil was hardly better than a stalemate. Now all has changed. The Creator whose epic story flows through the pages of Scripture has begun to dissolve the strongholds of evil. This new drama is being played out every hour around the globe, accompanied sometimes by mind-bending miracles.”*

---

Furthermore, unlike Islamic countries where you are born a Muslim, Christianity must re-win every generation. No one is born a Christian. Each young person must first hear the gospel, believe it, and accept it personally; that is, to personally receive Christ as his / her Lord and Savior. What a task!

Prayer: Oh Lord, please send some missionaries from China, Africa, and Asia to America to save Christians from political correctness and fear of the government, and to save the heathen in this country.

## 20. The First Communion in Scripture

*“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him (Abraham) . . .” - Genesis 14:18.*

After defeating five kings in Syria near Mt. Hermon, Abraham meets Melchizedek who brought bread and wine to refresh the exhausted victors.

Melchizedek, the mysterious king-priest, brightened Abraham’s day by refreshing his body and soul with bread and wine.

At this simple feast, the King of Salem formally blessed Abraham and the LORD for giving the patriarch victory over five Bedouin kings. At this moment the Spirit moved. A unique and special communion took place between the Melchizedek, Abraham, and the LORD that only the three of them could fully appreciate; that is, this is the first communion between God and men recorded in the Bible.

*Genesis 14:17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the*

*valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale. 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. 21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. 22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, 23 That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich.*

Note the facts in this account:

Sodom followed Abraham. Melchizedek stood between Abraham and the King of Sodom.

Abraham defeated five marauding kings in an effort to rescue Lot and the captives of Sodom. Exhausted and fearful he was met by the king of Sodom who trailed the captives. Melchizedek king of peace brought supplies (bread and wine) to feed the weary army and the captives; that is, he intervened between the king of Sodom and Abraham.

Melchizedek held two offices: that of king and that of a priest. He administered justice as king; and, the result of his priestly duties favored peace. No other person in the Bible held these two offices except our Lord.

Melchizedek was not a self-proclaimed priest, or a priest, but a "High Priest." He was not a priest of just any god, but the High Priest of God (Elohim) — a de jure High Priest of the Most High God, Possessor / owner / creator / "holder in due course" of "Heaven and Earth" (14:19-22); that is, he was a genuine, valid, bona fide High Priest of the one, true, infinite, virtuous, personal triune Spirit who is the God of Creation, the God of Israel, the God of the Bible, and the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He is uniquely-called the priest of the Most High God who got the will of God done on earth and not the will of man (Hebrews 7:1).

Melchizedek ministered to Abram and his "posse" after his arduous chase of the five kings and the recovery of Lot by providing them bread and wine. This supply provided food for energy and wine to quench thirst — the most fundamental of all human needs. But, it was more than this. It was the First Communion — a mystical fellowship that took place between Melchizedek, Abraham, and the Most High. The bread and wine remind us of Jesus exhortation, "Do this in remembrance of me" — a holy communion honoring Him as the Savior-King-Priest-Sacrifice.

At this communion, Melchizedek “blessed” Abraham the Patriarch and Father of the Hebrew nation (14:19), not the other way around. This means that Melchizedek was greater in status than Abraham.

This blessing was not a cursory, “high-five” blessing, but a holy, authoritative blessing with Divine effect. He blessed, honored, and proclaimed the name of the Most High God for giving Abraham victory in his war against the five tyrants.

Though some time elapsed, Abraham tithed 10% of his assets to Melchizedek – a formal decree that this king-priest was greater in importance, status, and character than Abraham, the Father of Israel.

The intervention, mediation, and blessing of Melchizedek gave Abraham the strength to reject Sodom’s contract offer to the patriarch. Still beaming from the sunshine of communion with Melchizedek and the Most High God, Abraham lifted up his hand to the Most High God, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth, rejected the contract, and proclaimed his devotion and allegiance to the LORD (See Psalm 50:14).

Lifting up the hand(s) was not like contemporary feelers do in modern coffee-cup church services, but an act of surrender to the jurisdiction of the Most High – an act of oath taking – a pledge of allegiance to the LORD, the Most High God – an act of accepting Christ as our Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9) – an act declaring our devotion to the LORD God and his law – an act that renews one’s covenant to the Savior – an act that bestows a privilege status upon believers whereby they have the right to appear in court and make their request known to *elyown* (the Most High – Psalm 50:14-15).

Everything about Melchizedek speaks of Christ, points to Christ, and foretells men of the ultimate King-Priest. Melchizedek is telling us to come to the theater, sit down, and gaze at Christ – to trust Christ to meet our temporal and eternal needs.

Thus, the first communion was a powerful encounter between the Most High God, Melchizedek His king-priest, and Abraham – a fellowship around a decree of blessing, bread, and wine.

Likewise, when we remember Christ at the breaking of the bread, we commune with the Father and the Son. In so doing, we receive strength to reject Sodom’s contract offers and to “throw up our hands to keep our covenant of peace with the Most High (Psalm 50:14). Our strength is in our devotion to Christ.

# 21. The Ordinance of Baptism

## SEVEN BAPTISMS IN THE NT

- John's baptism, the baptism of repentance (Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:4),
- the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13-15),
- the baptism of Moses (1 Corinthians 10:2),
- the baptism of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 6:3ff; Ephesians 4:5),
- the baptism of the cross (Mark 10:38),
- the baptism of the dead (1 Corinthians 15:29), and
- Believer's baptism (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-41, Acts 8:12; 10:47).

The baptism we are concerned with here is believer's baptism.

## BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

Baptism is response commanded by God. While it does not save men, it certainly does separate the sheep from goats. It is not necessary for justification, but it is necessary for sanctification. Baptism is not essential to obtain salvation, but those who have obtained salvation are baptized. It should be the first command one obeys after bowing the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

The word "go" is an aorist participle used in an imperative sense. It can be translated, "having gone" or "having initiate action to go into all the world." The key verb is "teach" or "make disciples" (maqteu,sate). Making disciples is the mission of the church.

"Make disciples" is an aorist imperative implying action that needs to be initiated at once.

"Baptizing" is a temporal participle concurrent with the main verb, "make disciples." It should be translated, "make disciples while baptizing them." "In the name" is a singular accusative. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are connected by "kai" the Greek conjunctive.

This does not support trine baptism; that is, baptizing them in the name of the Father, in the name of the Son, and the name of the Holy Spirit. While there are

three distinct personalities in the godhead, there is only one God and one Name and one baptism.

Baptism was commanded by the Savior, obeyed by the apostles and practiced by the early church. Baptism is considered a church ordinance; that is, an authoritative decree or command. It is not an option for the one who has declared his allegiance to Christ. All believers should be baptized.

### **WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BELIEVER'S BAPTISM?**

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter proclaimed the gospel and challenged people to repent. Over 3000 souls were baptized. Baptizing believers has followed gospel proclamation since the birth of the church.

Water baptism is an **outward statement** about an **inward reality**. When a person receives Christ as his Savior, he identifies himself with the Lord. At that moment, the believer immediately inherits ALL THE BENEFITS of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. He is instantaneously "blessed with all spiritual blessings . . ." (Ephesians 1:3-4). As a symbol of his faith, he surrenders to water baptism. It does not symbolize the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection as much as it symbolizes the believer's union with His Lord. Baptism, therefore, becomes a **public declaration** about **personal identification – about the believer's union with Christ**. It is a physical testimony about a spiritual transformation. It is a symbolic statement about a concrete commitment. When a person is baptized, he proclaims his identification with Christ– that he has entered into the blessings of salvation.

Believer's baptism, therefore, presupposes regeneration. That is, a person that has not experienced justification / regeneration has nothing to proclaim and therefore cannot be a candidate for baptism.

Baptism does not save souls or wash away sins! It does not bring one in contact with the blood. Going into water does not cleanse the conscience or purify the inner man. Baptism is not meritorious or conditional for salvation. It is the *doing and dying* of Christ on behalf of men that cleanses from sin (Hebrews 9:14; 1 John 1:7).

Acts 16:30-31 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

### **WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?**

All who have repented of sin and trusted the risen Lord Jesus Christ as Savior should be baptized. This should be done willingly and gladly (Acts 2:41). Non-Christians should not be baptized because baptism is only for believers. Infants should not be baptized because they have not come to an age of responsibility

nor have they accepted Christ as their Savior. Baptism is only for those who have placed their faith in Christ as their Savior.

And as they went on their way, they came unto certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

And Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:36-37).

Many churches baptize babies. We see neither a command nor example in Scripture to merit the historic practice of infant baptism. To our knowledge, neither Jesus nor His disciples baptized children. While the children of Christian parents are "holy" (1 Corinthians 7:14), "set apart" for a special work of grace, and may be dedicated to the Lord (1 Samuel 1:28), this certainly does not justify the doctrine of infant baptism. The primary requirement to be baptized is the possession of true faith (Acts 16:30-32). Infants do not have saving faith (Ephesians 2:8-9), though some are set apart for salvation. [\[1\]](#)

Infant baptism, although popular in several denominations, is a religious ceremony not found in the Bible. The clear and overwhelming evidence from the New Testament is that only believers were baptized, and that they were baptized by immersion. We simply do not need more baptized "unbelievers" in church. There is no such thing as "covenant children" in the NT. God only has one kind of child and that is true, born-again children. To speak of "covenant children" in the NT is an insertion of doctrine into Scripture that is not there. There is no example in Scripture of the apostles baptizing infants or unbelievers (Acts 2:38; 9:18; 19:5; Colossians 2:12, etc.).

### **WHY SHOULD ONE BE BAPTIZED?**

Baptism is not for the purpose of gaining salvation, being blessed, receiving the Holy Spirit or becoming a church member. One submits to baptism because he is saved, blessed, has the Holy Spirit, and is a member of the body of Christ (Acts 16:31; Ephesians 1:13, 14; 1 Corinthians 12:12). Baptism is not a requirement for justification (Romans 4:5), but it is a requirement for sanctification (obedience and growth). If one loves the Lord, he will gladly obey Him. Love for Christ is the motive of baptism.

*John 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

### **WHEN SHOULD A PERSON BE BAPTIZED?**

Mature Christians should teach new Christians about baptism immediately after conversion. One should be baptized after salvation, not before. In the New Testament, men and women were baptized within hours after their confession of faith (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 10:47). True faith is eager to obey the Lord Jesus. There

is little merit to any kind of delay when it comes to obedience in the Christian life (Luke 6:46). Likewise, those inadvertently baptized as a baby or as a young child and who come to know the Lord later in life, should submit to Christian baptism. If you are saved and you understand the reasons for baptism, then you should request to be baptized.

### HOW SHOULD ONE BE BAPTIZED?

Christians are commanded to baptize new believers (Matthew 28:19-20). But the mode of baptism is not commanded. It is somewhat obscure in Scripture. Christians still differ as to whether sprinkling or immersion is appropriate. The Greek word “baptizo” means “to place into” or “to dip.” A new believer is spiritually baptized or “placed into Christ” at his conversion by the Spirit and immediately inherits the benefits of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:2-4).

The baptism of Romans 6 is a reference to the spiritual mystery of being identified with the history of Christ. This is a spiritual operation and does not refer to water baptism.

Water baptism, on the other hand, is an accurate and adequate picture of the believer’s identification with Christ. Going down into the water is a beautiful symbol of one’s faith in death, burial, and resurrection of Christ—that one’s old relationship with sin is finished. Coming out of the water is a simple and clear statement that one has a new life in Christ that he co-shares in the resurrected life of our highly-exalted Savior.

Those Christians who practice sprinkling as the mode of baptism, usually those in the Covenant Camp, approach the subject somewhat differently. To these believers, *baptism is a picture of one coming under the kingdom blessings of Christ, namely the blessings of the Eschatological Spirit.*

Sprinkling, then, is a symbol that one has entered into salvic blessings secured by the death of Jesus . . . and this is certainly true! When one considers how many things were sprinkled by blood or water in the Old Testament, sprinkling is not an unreasonable, unbiblical practice. And, in light of the enormous costs of building baptismals, sprinkling becomes all that more practical.

Historically, **Latourette** and other church historians find evidence that immersion was the primary means of baptism in early church history (Latourette, 1975). Baptism was a serious affair. Candidates were questioned on their faith. If they passed the test, they were baptized in cold, running water—preferably a pure, clear stream: Children first, then men, and finally the women. They were baptized naked. Nothing was taken into the water but their body. Following their baptism, the bishop placed salt on the tongue as a symbol they must follow Christ, speak the truth for him, and be prepared to die for their Lord.

Personally, I do not think the mode of baptism (sprinkling or immersion) should be an issue of fellowship. But, I do believe that immersion is a better picture of being identified with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ than sprinkling. In modern times, building codes, have made it practically impossible to build simple baptismal in churches. A building code in Albuquerque required that churches provide wheel chair access into the tank. When engineers drafted a plan, the cost for providing wheel chair access was over 200 hundred thousand dollars. The church literally left the plastic tank sit in the back of the church as an ugly eye sore. Can anyone say, "sprinkling?"

### **WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?**

Usually, an ordained minister will assist new Christians in obeying the Lord in baptism. Church practices and policies vary from denomination to denomination.

On the day of Pentecost, over 3000 people were baptized, and on another occasion over 5000 men and possibly that many women and children were baptized as well (Acts 4:4). I can't imagine twelve apostles baptizing five-thousand men and possibly a total of ten thousand to twelve thousand people in one day. They must have had help!

When Philip went preaching the gospel, he baptized the Ethiopian eunuch. He did not seem to be too concerned about "proper authority." If a person is a Christian, he has authority to make disciples and baptize new converts by virtue of our Lord's command in Matthew 28.

Every mature Christian has the responsibility to instruct others about baptism, and if necessary, to service the baptismal needs of new converts. I do not see that God placed a limitation on who can do the baptizing. As long as it is done with dignity and for the right reason, any believer can baptize another believer.

### **WHAT IF I WAS BAPTIZED AS A CHILD**

Baptism is for believers, for people who have come to an age of responsibility and made a personal, independent decision to follow Christ.

Infant baptism or pre-conversion baptism can dangerously give false hope, it confuses issues regarding one's salvation. It is not a true statement of conversion. It was something done to you by well-meaning people, but it required no act of faith or obedience on your part. Those baptized as unconverted children have the "cart before the horse."

Baptism is something one does after he accepts Christ and not before (John 1:10-12; Acts 10:47). If you had parents that dedicated you to the Lord when you were a baby, you are blessed. If you were baptized as a child or before your true conversion by the will of another, then assert your will now in



obedience to Christ and submit to believer's baptism. It is the correct course of action.

Having said this, the argument of R.C. Sproul with John McArthur regarding infant baptism certainly has merit and must be considered!!

### **SHOULD A CHURCH REQUIRE BAPTISM FOR MEMBERSHIP?**

When one receives Christ as Savior, he automatically becomes a member of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-14).

Water baptism does not make one a part of His Body, but it may identify him or her with a particular gathering of believers. Christ commanded baptism. It is the will of God.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:41-42).

But, to do as some SBC churches do and require Christians who were baptized in another Christian denomination to resubmit to baptism in an SBC church denies the unity of the church of Jesus Christ.

### **SHOULD A PERSON BE REBAPTIZED?**

One should get baptized once as a statement, a symbol of his identification with Christ after his conversion. One need not get baptized again to become a member of a church, nor should a believer ever get baptized again to join another church. This would deny the unity of the body of Christ. The church should accept all Christians who have made a profession of faith, and have submitted to believer's baptism in other evangelical churches after their conversion.

### **WHERE SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?**

Whether you are baptized in a river, or a lake, or a chapel is immaterial to God. He is simply interested in obedience (Acts 8:36). Where full immersion is not possible, sprinkling or pouring is acceptable, in my opinion.

## **22. The Ordinance of Headcoverings**

### **1 Corinthians 11**

The wearing of fabric head coverings in worship was universally the practice of Christian women until the middle of the twentieth century. What happened?

Did we suddenly find some biblical truth to which the saints for thousands of years were blind? Or were our biblical views of women gradually eroded by the modern feminist movement that has infiltrated the Church...? - R.C. Sproul

*1 Corinthians 11:4-5 Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying, disgraces his head. But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying, disgraces her head; for she is one and the same with her whose head is shaved.*



Figure 11: Source unknown

It has been a tradition for men to remove their hats during prayer and for women to wear a headcovering during prayer since the conception of Christianity.

Christian art is dominated by women adorning themselves with a veil or scarf.

Among the Amish, Mennonites, and Plymouth Brethren, and some Presbyterian and Baptist churches, the practice still continues.

All of these groups have a high view of Scripture and their people are known for their piety. In the major denominations, men still remove their hats in church, but unfortunately, the wearing of the veil by women has been abrogated by compromised Christianity.

There are several reasons why modern women do not cover their heads in prayer.

**First**, the American church is very much a product of the culture. The Woman's Suffrage Movement was in full bloom in the 1920s. Prohibition contributed to the breakdown of moral in the 1930s. Women started taking of their clothes for men's magazines in the 1950. Around 1960 the practice of women covering their heads in prayer shifted. In the age of movie stars and the inauguration of skin magazines, everything came off. Bikinis were in! Feminism burst on the scene and women were drafted into the cult of arrogance.

By the time the mini-skirt rage hit the pop culture (1966), headcoverings all but disappeared in the church.

**Second**, the rise of feminism influenced theology and modern Bible commentators culturalized the practice teaching that headcovering was just a local Corinthian problem wherein the early church did not want their women to

look like temple prostitutes. John McArthur and the Baptists were caught up in this storm.

But, the trend to culturalize uncomfortable parts of Scripture has infected the church to such an extent that even homosexuality, a Biblical abomination, is being accepted by churchmen. Following the cultural argument, why not culturalize baptism, the Lord's Supper, the cross, and blood atonement?

*Third*, we are living in a day of apostasy. Few Christians read the Bible. Most believe it is irrelevant. Fewer still study the Scripture and believe in the principle of "sola Scriptura." Even the principle of male headship in the home and the duty of a woman to obey her husband seems like an alien dogma to modern Americans. Feminism conquered alpha males. And, the government became the second husband to divorced women.

*Fourth*, women spend a great deal of time preparing to go to church and which one of them wants to mess up their hair by wearing a veil? But, instead of pleasing men, woman would do better to figure out what pleases God . . . and, wearing a veil pleases the Lord. Even the angels have an interest in godly women who veil themselves.

*Fifth*, as the world has defined "freedom" to do anything you please, the church as a whole plunged into antinomianism. Churches became liberal, lawless, and permissive. Preaching the law of God was seen as legalistic, stogy, and pontifical. In such a climate, men faithful to the Word may find themselves out on a limb all alone preaching to squirrels and chipmunks.

*Let's look at Paul's argument:*



Figure 12: Freepik Mary

Paul calls the church to imitate him as he imitates Christ (11:1).

The topic of this chapter is **headship** (11:1-2), **head coverings** (11:3-16), and **Head remembering** (11:17ff). Three symbols are venerated in this chapter: **the veil**, **the bread**, and **the cup of wine**.

Paul advances an ancient truth, the hierarchy of authority: **God, Christ, man, woman**. This chain of command appears to be a solid, biblical, unchanging order related to Adam and the headship of the man in the family ([Genesis 3:16](#)).

[Note, the *first law* in Torah after the fall is that the woman shall be under the authority of the man.]

***Paul exhorts men to remove any head apparel in worship and for women to cover their heads ("something down the head" like a scarf or veil) for the following reasons:***

**(1) Headship (11:1-4):**

The grand subject of this section is authority. God, Christ, man, and woman form the chain of command. *Headcoverings are a sign of a women's obedience to God and acceptance of His law-order.*

The wearing of a veil is a symbol of Christ's authority over man, man's authority over the woman, and that she is under her husband's coverture.

The practice of a woman covering her head is a visible, object lesson that God created man to be the head and protector of his home and a woman to be his "helpmeet."

**(2) Shame (11:5-6):**



Figure 13: Unsplash:  
Caique Nascimento

Paul taught that if a man prays while having his head covered (*kata keppalas ekon*) having something down the head like a tallit or prayer shawl, he disgraces his head. The term "*his head*" appears to be a reference to Christ. A man who will not remove his hat during prayer, like the pope, shames the Lord Jesus Christ; and, is saying: "May no one ever see Christ as head of the church because He is not worth honoring."

Likewise, a woman who prays uncovered (*akatalupto*), shames her head. It is not clear whether Paul is saying that an uncovered woman embarrasses herself or her husband. Since the context is headship and authority, I presume that the unveiled woman shames her husband and disregards God's chain of command -- a

rebellious failure to acknowledge God's law-order ([Genesis 3:16](#)).

Paul is emphatic! Every woman praying without something "down the head" expresses contempt for God's law-order and reproaches her husband. Thus, we conclude ***it is the duty of every man to instruct his wife about God's law-order and her duty to veil herself in obedience to her godly husband.***

***An unveiled woman in church is evidence the husband is either ignorant of God's Word or in rebellion against the Lord.***

If the problem of an unveiled woman and the women will not cover her hair, she was to be sheared that she might emotionally feel the shame of praying while uncovered.

An uncovered woman was like the *hetairai*, the temple prostitutes in Corinth and adulteresses who was punished by having their head shaved (Numbers 5:18). A shaved head is a universal stigma among women. So universally shameful is a bald woman, a shaven woman would be forced to wear a veil until her hair grew out again--a hard way to learn this lesson in that day!

[Note: During WWII, the French shaved a woman's head for sleeping with Germans.]

Thus, shearing was the discipline for the rebellious woman.



Figure 14: Source unknown

### (3) Theology (11:7):

The reason given for the practice of veiling was theological. Removing a covering from the head of a male was a statement announcing the glory of God. When men remove their hats they proclaim, "May the glory of man be hidden so that the glory of God be seen in this place."

When a woman covers her head, she is making a statement, "May the glory of man be concealed in this place so the glory of God may be made known." "May God be honored here, and not men . . . or women!" This is consistent with our Lord's prayer, "glorify your Son, that the Son may glorify you" (John 17:1).

When a woman approaches God, she does so while graciously recognizing the role that He created for her. The veil is a statement that the Christian woman accepts her husband's authority (or father's authority) over her. The whole idea of a unisex approach to God is foreign to Scripture -- a product of an alien law-order. He made us male and female and each has an ordained approach to God in worship.

### (4) Creative Order and Purpose (11:8):

The practice of hat removal and head covering recognizes God's created order and purpose. It teaches the ignorant about the order of creation; that man was created first, and that woman was created second. Man (adam) was the head of the family -- the woman his helpmeet. A woman's practice of covering her head is a symbolic statement that proclaims the creative order and the purpose of the sexes--that woman was created for the man, not the man for the woman.

Sexual differences are not the result of the fall, but the product of creation and God's law-order for the home. To prove the validity of the practice, Paul cites Biblical authority from Genesis. If wearing a headcovering was merely a cultural practice, Paul would **not** have appealed to the "Big Guns" in Torah to fortify a local custom. It would be inappropriate for any man to use the heavy artillery of the Law to support a temporal fad or a passing fashion.

Paul adds in this verse even the truth of the universal dependence of the sexes on each other lest any male should drift into arrogance and pride. *Headcovering is about order, not superiority!* Both men and women of faith are declared to be children of God (John 1:10-13).

**(5) Angelic Education (11:10):**



Figure 15: Freepik

Apparently, angels take a great interest in headcoverings. How rare and beautiful it must be for angels to see a holy woman – a woman who understands God’s law-order and surrenders to it.

In Isaiah six, we notice that seraphim covered their faces and their feet with their wings in the presence of the thrice holy God. Holy things are often covered. The tabernacle furniture and the veiling of the face of Moses come to

mind.

Paul says headcoverings in church educate angels about authority; i.e., angels are instructed as to why Christ died for men instead of angels. Our Lord died, not because he was a martyr, but because He was obedient to His heavenly Father. His submission to the Father demanded a death-walk to the cross.

Furthermore, the headcovering instructs angels that their Lord died for sinful men who were made in the image of God and that he did not die for fallen angels who are mere servants of the Most High. When women cover their heads, they model our Lord’s submission to His heavenly father – a spectacular wonderment to the angels.

**(6) Propriety (11:13):**

Paul appeals to the Corinthian sense of propriety for the continuance of this practice. The custom of women veiling in prayer was so common in the churches, Paul could appeal to this tradition as a matter of orthodoxy – an honorable tradition in the early church.

In the east women veil themselves in public as a sign of propriety; unmarried women usually do not wear a veil.

Apparently, the practice of headcovering was a matter of apostolic authority with such established tradition in the church that it was not open to debate. The Christian position is more liberal than the Jewish tradition where women veiled even their faces, but more conservative than the libertine Corinthians where women paraded in public unveiled.



Figure 16: Source unknown

The Jewish tradition today for men in a synagogue to wear a yarmaka is the exact opposite of Christian teaching<sup>[1]</sup>.

Messianic communities that endure the practice of men wearing a yarmaka (or Catholic bishops) are taking their cue from modern unbelieving Jews rather than from the blessed teaching of Rabbi Paul, the bondservant of the Lord Jesus Christ; that is, veiled men join the rebellion of antichrists!

### **(7) Nature (11:14):**

Paul appeals to nature for the continuance of the symbolic practice of a women's headcovering. Men tend toward baldness. Long hair on women is a universal standard of beauty. Nature tells us that Christ is the head of man, and that women are the glory of man. Paul reasons that if a woman's long hair is given to her for a natural covering, she should be inclined to wear a spiritual covering ("something down the head") like a veil or scarf.

Paul is *not* saying that long hair is a substitute for a veil nor is he condemning a shorter hair style in public fashions. *He appeals to natural law as a reason to practice the spiritual law.* The whole idea that long hair is a symbol of submission is ludicrous and something even libertarians will not accept. Wearing a headcovering is consistent with nature because it is a spiritual sign pointing to the natural order of the original creation.

### **(8) Unity (11:15-16):**

Paul argues that the churches of his day practiced the custom of veiling, and he urges the Corinthians to adopt the same common tradition. Failure to comply exposed a contentious spirit; i.e., rebellion against God's law-order. His purpose of mentioning the term "*contentious*" was meant to cut off the debate. A woman who attends church without a veil shows contempt for God's law-order! She is the dreaded "*contentious*" woman mentioned in Proverbs. Selah!

Out of all the reasons given to practice the tradition of headcovering *not one was cultural.*

In fact, Paul appealed to the principles in the OT to persuade these believers to accept the practice of veiling. Apostles do not appeal to the OT Scriptures to invoke a temporal, cultural practice. To speculate that Paul was addressing a local, petty cultural problem at Corinth is to invoke a rationale foreign to the reasons Paul himself gives in this chapter. Furthermore, we would not only put words in the Apostle's mouth that is not there, we would ignore the reasons that are there.

*An argument from silence is null and void.*

The ancient practice of hat removal by men and wearing headcovering by women does not appear to have any practical value. The practice is iconic or symbolic of the Divine order for humanity. Since man is made in the image of God (icon), men are to imitate God. Women, on the otherhand, are NOT the icon of man but the glory of man.

Women have no duty to emulate man or to accumulate masculine traits. In fact, they are forbidden to do so.

The practice of wearing a veil has been abandoned by many modern churches, but it has not been disregarded by Western Civilization even though most have no idea why they practice hat removing and hair covering. In going to football games or public events where prayer is offered, most men will remove their hats and helmets, and most women, if they have something on their head, let it remain. Isn't it ironic that the pagans honor the tradition while many churches have generally abandoned the Biblical practice?

The greater problem is not women, but Christian men who are either ignorant of the doctrine of head coverings or refusing to take a stand on head covering because they are living permissively in rebellion against God's law-order.

*Let's look at what the church fathers had to say:*



Figure 17: Source  
unknown

**Irenaeus** (120-202 AD): Irenaeus translates 1 Corinthians 11:10 as follows:

"A woman ought to have a veil [*kalumma*] upon her head, because of the angels."( Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book 1, 8:2, cited in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, A. Cleveland Cox, ed., (U.S.A: The Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885), I:327. )

**Tertullian** (150-225 AD) discussed whether the command for a woman to wear a veil applied to virgins. This discussion would not have occurred if headcoverings were not a common practice among the churches. Tertullian, *On Prayer*, cited in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, A. Cleveland Cox, ed., (U.S. A.: The Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885),

III:687.

**Clement of Alexandria** (153-217 AD): Clement understands the words in 1 Corinthians 11:5 to refer to a veil of fabric and not to a woman's hair.

"And she will never fall, who puts before her eyes modesty, and her shawl; nor will she invite another to fall into sin by uncovering her face. For this is the



wish of the Word, since it is becoming for her to pray veiled" [1 Corinthians 11:5 GLP].( Clement of Alexandria, The Instructor, cited in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, A. Cleveland Cox, ed., (U.S.A: The Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885), II:290.).

**Jerome** (345-429 AD):

"It is usual in the monasteries of Egypt and Syria for virgins and widows who have vowed themselves to God and have renounced the world and have trodden under foot its pleasures, to ask the mothers of their communities to cut their hair; not that afterwards they go about with heads uncovered in defiance of the apostles command" [1 Corinthians 11:5].( Jerome, Letter CXLVII:5, cited in The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Philip Schaff, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co.), VI:292. 13. Augustine, Of the Work of Monks, cited in The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Philip Schaff, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co.), III:523.

**Augustine** (354-430 AD):

"We ought not therefore so to understand that made in the image of the Supreme Trinity, that is, in the image of God, as that same image should be understood to be in three human beings; especially when the apostle says that the man is the image of God, and on that account removes the covering from his head, which he warns the woman to use, speaking thus: 'For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man.'" Jerome, Letter CXLVII:5, cited in The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Philip Schaff, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co.), VI:292. 13. Augustine, Of the Work of Monks, cited in The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Philip Schaff, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co.), III:158.

(347-407)

**Chrysostom** on 1 Corinthians. 11:3:

"The head of woman is man," compares God in his universal regiment to a king sitting in his royal majesty, to whom all his subjects, commanded to give homage and obedience, appear before him, bearing every one such a badge and cognizance of dignity and honour as he has given to them; which if they despise and condemn, then do they dishonour their king. *"Even so,"* says he, *"ought man and woman to appear before God, bearing the ensigns of the condition which they have received of him. Man has received a certain glory and dignity above the woman; and therefore ought he to appear before his high Majesty bearing the sign of his honour, having no cover upon his head, to witness that in earth man has no head."* Beware Chrysostom what you say! You shall be reputed a traitor if Englishmen hear you, for they must have my sovereign lady and mistress; and

Scotland has drunken also the enchantment and venom of Circe <sup>5</sup>let it be so to their own shame and confusion. <sup>6</sup>

**Martin Luther** (1483-1546):

On January 15th 1525, Martin Luther preached a message on marriage. In his sermon he said this:

Women, be subject to your husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife" [[Eph 5:22-23](#)]. Again to the Colossians in the third chapter [3:18]. Because of this, the wife has not been created out of the head, so that she shall not rule over her husband, but be subject and obedient to him.

For that reason the wife wears a headdress, that is, the veil on her head, as St. Paul writes in 1. Corinthians in the second chapter, that she is not free but under obedience to her husband. <sup>1</sup>

**John Calvin** (1509-1564):

"When he says 'her hair is for a covering [1 Corinthians 11:15 GLP],' he does not mean that as long as a woman has hair, that should be enough for her. He rather teaches that our Lord is giving a directive that He desires to have observed and maintained. If a woman has long hair, this is equivalent to saying to her, 'Use your headcovering, use your hat, use your hood; do not expose yourself in that way!' (Seth Skolnitsky, trans., Men, Women and Order in the Church: Three

Sermons by John Calvin, (Dallas, TX: Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1992), p. 53)

**John Knox** (1505-1572 AD):

*"First, I say, the woman in her greatest perfection was made to serve and obey man, not to rule and command him.* As saint Paule doth reason in these wordes: 'Man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. And man was created for the cause of the woman, but the woman for the cause of man; and therefore ought the woman to have a power upon her head,' (that is, a coverture in signe of subjection)." (John Knox, "The First Blast Of The Trumpet Against The Monstrous Regiment Of Women," Works of John Knox, David Laing, ed. (Edinburgh: Printed For The Bannatyne Club), IV:377.) (Emphasis mine)

**Matthew Henry** (in his Commentary on the Whole Bible, published in 1706)

"The woman, on the other hand, who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head [1 Corinthians 11:5-6 GLP], namely, the man, v.3. She appears in the dress of her superior, and throws off the token of her subjection. She might, with equal decency, cut her hair short, or cut it close, which was the custom of the man in that age. This would be in a manner to declare that she was desirous of changing sexes, a manifest affectation of that

superiority which God had conferred on the other sex." Matthew Henry, Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible, (McLean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Co.), VI:561.

**A.T. Robertson** (Word Pictures ~1931):

". . . it is the sign of authority of the man over the woman. The veil on the woman's head is the symbol of the authority that the man with the uncovered head has over her [1 Corinthians 11:10]." A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1931), IV:162.

**J. Vernon McGee** (1904-1990):



Figure 18: Freepik

"Apparently some of the women in the church at Corinth were saying, 'All things are lawful for me, therefore, I won't cover my head.' Paul says this should not be done because the veil is a mark of subjection." Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee, (Pasadena, CA: Thru The Bible Radio, 1983), V:50.

I can't help but think one of the reasons we are facing so many cultural problems in the family due to liberalism and the rise of feminism. Consequently, the Christian church has dropped the symbolic practice of men removing hats during prayer and women veiling themselves during prayer.[\[2\]](#)

Isn't neglect of God's law-order at the root of so many problems in the family? Today, people do not understand God's creative order or his purpose for the sexes . . . or that there are ONLY two sexes. It is next to impossible to tell the difference between the godly and the ungodly, between men and women, between right and wrong not only by dress but by demeanor. Feminism wages war against gender roles and confusion reigns. The whole idea that a person can choose his sexual identity is to proclaim that man is a god with his own law-order.

Though I am persuaded the practice has solid validity, I have come to realize that the casual church does not have the wherewithal to practice these truths; nor does the average Christian husband have enough rope on his bucket to dip into this well of truth taught in this chapter. Christians who are as shallow as a puddle on the sidewalk do not have the spiritual maturity to accept the ABC's of Christian doctrine.

A preacher who preaches the truth with any conviction will ruffle feathers, and may find themselves pecked out of the hen house; moreover, a woman who practices veiling may find herself scratching for grain alone under the porch.

Some teach it best to put this passage in the category of “doubtful things” (Romans 14) and leave the matter up to the individual conscience. But even this is apostasy. There is nothing doubtful about the command for a woman to veil her head.

The Apostle emphatically states, “if any man seem to be contentious (resistant to the practice of veiling), we have no such custom, neither the churches of God!” That is if anyone does not recognize this practice, he should not be recognized as a true Christian in the church of God! Such a person is not taking the Word of God seriously -- the attitude of apostates.

**In conclusion**, this passage declares three truths: headship, headcoverings, and Head remembering. The godly woman is exhorted to cover her head as a statement of God's law-order.

[1] Jeff Raskin, 1990, describes rather humorously the origin of the yarmulke tradition in his [History of the Yarmulke](#)

(<http://humane.sourceforge.net/humor/yarmulke.html>). He says, it is not known when Jewish men began to wear the yarmulke. It is not rooted in ancient tradition, and apparently is a rather recent invention. It took ten men to make up a synagogue, and sometimes, Jewish men would gather outside under the Sun to pray where the balder men would get sunburned. At first, these men would pray under an umbrella to keep from burning themselves. Later, bald men, started wearing a skull cap to protect themselves. Somewhere after the sunburn and the umbrella, the rabbis of rabbis rejected the umbrella as sacrilegious and sanctioned the yarmulke as an approved form of sunburn protection. The common practice evolved into a standard liturgical worship apparel among Jews. Tradition!

[2] I was in an outdoor football stadium after 9/11 where the whole crowd of 35,000 observed a minute of silence. The men removed their hats, and the women kept their hats on. Interestingly, the culture seemed to retain this tradition while the church has totally abandoned it. Personally, I can't figure out why the church has forsaken the practice unless it is due to the fact that woman don't like to mess up their dry-blown hair on Sunday morning.

## 23. 1 Corinthians 11 – Five Sacred Symbols in Christianity

Throughout the ages, pious Christians have honored five sacred symbols associated with Christianity.

### The Cross

*“But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.” – Galatians 6:14.*

The cross is the most sacred symbol of Christianity. The symbol is on every true church building as it represents the accomplishments of Christ for salvation. The cross surfaced as dogmatic symbol adopted by all Christians during the church age to remind them of the Savior ‘s accomplishments at Calvary and to prevent apostasy – a worthy, honorable, wise praxis having the full support of our Lord.

*Matthew 18:18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

Traditionally, from earliest times, universal Catholics make the sign of the cross in prayer. Unfortunately, the Protestant Reformation throughout the “baby with the bathwater.” In this age of apostasy, mindful “protestant” Catholics would do well to restore the practice:

*Cruci dum spiro fido* – “As long as I breathe, I will remember the cross.”

### Baptism

From the first days of gospel proclamation (Acts 2) until now, Baptism is an act in which a Christian is immersed in water to symbolize the end of an old way of living, and a new start – his being taken out of Adam and placed into the victorious history of Christ (Romans 6).

Whether it be by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling, all pious men are baptized as a symbol they have been placed into the history of Christ to share in His victories. This was not a temporary cultural practice but a dogmatic ordinance imposed on all Christians during the church age to prevent apostasy.

### Headcoverings

*2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.*

The verb “keep” (*atecho*) is an imperative the Corinthians obeyed. Paul commends the Corinthian flock for remembering him and for keeping the

ordinances he delivered to them. It takes positive energy to incorporate a Biblical practice into the life of a community, and the Corinthians had a zeal to arrange themselves under the authority of God's Law-word and to obey it.

The word "*ordinance*" (*paradosis*), a cognate noun stemming from the verb "*paradidomi*." It refers to authoritative apostolic traditions established in the early church. In using the term "*ordinance*," the apostle is not referring to personal preferences or frivolous rituals or local Corinthian customs, but enduring practices applicable to all men for all time rooted in God's law. Geopolitical Israel had their feasts and festivals to aid them in their worship of YHWH and the church has its ordinances to build up the people of God.

The verbal form of "*ordinance*" (*paradosis*), meaning a command, is used in verse 23 in reference to Paul establishing the Lord's Supper as an ordinance to be practiced in the church; that is, a Divine sanction to be honored by God's people when they come together as Christians to honor our Lord. Baptism, communion, and headcoverings (*katakalypto*) are three dogmatic ordinances delivered to the church to keep God's people true to the faith.

Failure to see the practice of headcoverings as ordinances arising from Christian law has been the product of more than a little evil. Christians who neglect these warrants are more likely to violate the faith and slide into apostasy of feminism in the church.

Apparently, problems developed in the Corinthian community due to irregularities and objections to these ordinances. This was not a temporary cultural practice but a dogmatic ordinance imposed on all Christians during the church age to prevent apostasy.

### **The Women's Headcovering**

*11:5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.*

*11:6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.*

*11:10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.*

*11:16 But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.*

This passage is about headship – the authority of Christ over the man; the authority of the man-husband over the woman. The requirement to surrender to both authorities.

The uncovered head of the man is a symbol that man is marvelously-made in the image of God and that Christ is the head of every man.

The headcovering on the woman is a proclamation that God has a law-order; that she is under the authority over her husband (or father); that those gathered together in this place are here to focus on the glories of Christ and not the glory of man.

This passage is in the negative because it is the apostles' rebuke to women who come to church without a headcovering, and a rebuke to men who are ignorant of God's law-order and who have not instructed their wives about humility, authority, and how to reverence God in a church service. Yes, this ordinance, though rebelled against by the modern antinomian, apostate-permissive man, is still required by Holy Scripture. This was not a temporary cultural practice but a dogmatic ordinance imposed on all Christians during the church age to prevent apostasy.

### **The Bread**

*11:23-24 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.*

The bread is a holy symbol of the body of Christ broken and bruised for us at Calvary; a precious icon of his vicarious suffering He endured to save men — an icon which is sanctified (set apart) for religious services venerating the gospel of our Lord. All pious men remember the suffering of Christ and what it cost Him to redeem the souls of men on a weekly basis.

*10:16 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.*

The one loaf and our participation in taking a part of that bread is a proclamation that we being many, are one — that we individually have put our trust in Christ . . . and, that we share together in the benefits of our Lord's redemptive work at the cross; that believers from different races, cultures, and backgrounds belong to His fold. This was not a temporary cultural practice but a dogmatic ordinance imposed on all Christians during the church age to prevent apostasy.

### **The Cup of Blessing**

*11:25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

The cup is a symbol of Christ's blood; the currency of the spirit-world; the price of redemption; the consideration paid in a new contract (testament) between God and man; the only currency accepted in Heaven; that is, our participation in the cup is a faith-statement that we claim the efficacy of the

blood as the only means for forgiveness; for the discharge of our debt to God; for our eternal salvation.

**11:26** *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*

"Shew:" Christian participation in the bread and wine is a proclamation that the Lord's death was a redemptive act that saves sinners from their sins when they believe.

**10:16** *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*

The "*cup of blessing*" (*eulogia*) is called a blessing because of what the wine represents — the blood of Christ shed for our sins at Calvary (1 Peter 1:18-20). The blessing is that He shed his blood to redeem us from the penalty and power of sin. Because wine is red, it is a fitting symbol of the blood of Christ.

"We bless" means we set apart the cup (and the bread) for sacred use. We bless this "*cup of blessing*" because of what it signifies at Christian worship services. We "bless" means that we make prayers, says praises, and rehearse glorious liturgies while performing the duties associated with the holy sacrament.

"Both Luke and Paul, in their account of the institution, express this part of the action by εὐχαριστήσας, having given thanks. And hence the service itself hath long borne the name of the *eucharist*, or thanksgiving, by way of eminence" (Benson)

Taking the cup is sometimes called the "*Eucharist*." The term "*eucharist*" means "*giving thanks*." It is appropriate to call this "sacred meal" the "*Eucharist*" because Christians are thankful for what it represents . . . But in so doing we must separate it from "Roman Catholic Theology" which teaches more than the Scripture permits — that the wine and bread are mystically transformed into the actual body and blood of the Lord. The Roman Catholic doctrine of the "*eucharist*" empowers "priests," but this misinformation corrupts the truth about salvation to the injury of many.

The "*cup of blessing*" is not the literal blood of Christ! It is the "*communion of the blood of Christ*;" that is, it represent the believers communion (*koinonia*) with the Lord.

Drinking the "*cup of blessing*" is a personal statement that the worshiper is a participant in the benefits of the accomplishment of Christ at the cross; and, there is a holy, mystical, spiritual fellowship (communion) taking place between the living Christ and the worshiper when he participates in the "breaking of the bread."



This mystical blessing is not due to a magical quality of the bread or wine, but due to the remembrance of Christ (11:24-25) which the symbols invoke; that is, these symbols provoke sweet reflections about the Savior which are always a blessing to the worshiper.

Let us remember that participating in all of these symbols are essential for a healthy perspective about life and salvation. They are the practice of pious men (Acts 2:42). These were not temporary cultural practices but dogmatic ordinances imposed on all Christians during the church age to prevent apostasy.

## 24. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper

### *Remembering Christ and His Glorious Accomplishments*

#### **The Establishment of the Lord's Supper:**



Figure 19: Freepik

At the Last Supper took place during the Passover meal the night before the Lord was crucified. The Lord took the middle matza and declared that this was his body broken for us. Following this, Jesus took the third cup, the cup of redemption, and infused it with new meaning [Luke 22:20]. Since then, the bulky Passover ceremony was dropped, and Christians have retained the simple essence of what Jesus taught by regularly celebrating the Lord's Supper

and reflecting on Christ and His accomplishments.

#### **The authority of the Lord's Supper:**

*"for I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you . . ." [1 Corinthians 11:23].*

Christ instituted the Lord's Supper for the benefit of His people. The word "Lord" is mentioned seven times in Paul's account indicating that the Lord's Supper was not instituted by men, but by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The historical practice of the Lord's Supper: Originally, Christian came together to fellowship and enjoyed a full meal together in remembrance of

Christ. These became known as “Agape Feasts” or “Love Feasts.” These simple feasts continued in parts of the world for about 400 hundred years. Eventually, the Lord’s Supper became more liturgical and formal as Christianity was adopted as the official religion in the Roman Empire.

### **The meaning of the Lord’s Supper:**

Christians have not been united as to the meaning and significance of the Lord’s Supper.

Roman Catholics accept the view known as transubstantiation. Traditionally, this view holds that the bread and the wine are infused by the presence of Christ to mystically become the actual body and blood of the Savior. According to this tradition, the cup and the bread take on salvic significance.

Lutherans accepted a similar view of the Lord’s Supper called consubstantiation which asserts the bread and wine are not the actual body and blood of Christ [Catholicism], but that the bread and wine are actually infused with the presence of Christ. Lutherans understand the Lord’s Supper to be a means of God mediating grace from heaven to earth through the instruments of bread and wine. Grace comes from the presence of Christ in the elements.

Baptists and Presbyterians and those of like faith take a symbolic view of the Lord’s Supper and understand the bread and wine to be symbols of the body and blood of Christ. Grace comes, not because of some mystical presence of Christ in the elements, but because of the sweet thoughts about Christ that are stirred when reflecting on the Lord and His accomplishments at Calvary.

### **Meaning of the symbols:**

The bread is a symbol of the body of Christ. If God could have forgiven sin apart from the death of his son, He would have done so. Because He was a man with a real human body He could truly represent us and suffer on our behalf [Hebrews 10:10]. The wine is a symbol of the blood of Christ. It is Jesus’ death, not his life, that saves and redeems men from sin [Hebrews 13:12].

### **The Purpose of the Lord’s Supper**

It is a proclamation of the historical death of Christ: “*you do show the Lord’s death till he come.*” [1 Corinthians 11:26].

It is a proclamation of the meaning of his death: “this is my body which is broken for you.”

It is a proclamation of the individual’s participation in the death of Christ: “Is it not the communion of the body of Christ.” Eating and drinking is more than a memory of past events, it involves participation in the body and blood of Christ [10:21]. Furthermore, since judgment is connected with unworthy

participation, God is somehow present in this rite in a unique and wonderful manner.

It is a proclamation that all believers co-share in the accomplished work of Christ and are therefore one body: *“for we are all partakers of that one bread.”*

It is a proclamation of the believer’s devotion to Christ: *“Let a man examine himself and so let him eat.”*

It is a proclamation of the Lord’s return: *“You do show the Lord’s death till He come.”*

It is a proclamation of judgment to come: Paul says believers are judge if the partake of the Lord’s Supper in an unworthy manner. Thus, we have an eschatological judgment breaking in on the Lord’s Supper. Since the Lord took our sins, and was judged in our stead, we have a proclamation of judgment in regards to the Eschaton.

Jesus said, *“Do this in remembrance of me . . .”* The Lord’s Supper is **not** a memorial, but a remembrance service where affectionate hearts recall and reflect on the beauty of Another. Jesus did not ask his disciples to set up a memorial, a one-time act. Rather, he requested that his disciples *“remember”* Him.

Remembrance is much more precious than a monument. The Lord’s Supper is a time to remember His wonderful name [Song of Solomon 5:10, 16], to remember his redemptive work [1 Chronicles 16:12], to remember his suffering for us [1 Peter 2:22-24; Lamentations 3:19], to remember His love [1 John 4:19; John 15:8-13], to remember His glorification [Ephesians 1:22-23; Revelation 1:10ff], to remember His mercies [Romans 3:24-8:34], to remember His words and teaching [Acts 20:35; Colossians 3:16] and to remember His promise to come again [John 14:1-3].

The Lord’s Supper is primarily a worship service designed to reflect, thank, and remember the Savior for Who He is and what He accomplished for us at Calvary. Due to these sweet reflections, grace comes to our hearts.

The “Messianic Community” that refuses to celebrate communion weekly but celebrate the Passover Feast yearly in living in rebellion against the Lord.

Participants in the Lord’s Supper: Christians have taken one of two courses in relationship to the feast: [a] open communion, or [b] closed communion. The issue arises in part because of the church’s understanding of the purpose of the Lord’s Supper, and in part because of one’s understanding of where Judas was located during the time the Lord infused the third cup with meaning. Most scholars believe Judas was absent during the Lord’s instruction about the matter.

### The Importance of the Lord's Supper:

**First**, it is important to the Father that we remember His gift to the world [John 3:16]. He gave us His only begotten Son.

**Second**, it is important to the Son. As Lord, He commanded it [John 14:21]. As a friend, he requested it [John 13:14]. As a dying man, it was his passionate plea [Luke 22:15]. Third, it is important to the Spirit. The Son is the joy and delight of the Spirit. When Christians remember Christ, they are fulfilling the purpose for which the Spirit created them [Psalm 45:1-3]. Fourth, it is important to the church. It is one of four disciplines practiced by the early church [Acts 2:42; 20:7]. The church is energized and renewed as it reflects on the glories of the Savior.

### **Difference between the Lord's Table and the Lord's Supper**

#### *1 Corinthians 10:21ff*

| <i>The Lord's Table</i>                              | <i>The Lord's Supper</i>                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Its location is in heaven.                           | Its location is on earth.                                |
| It is a heaven's salvation feast – a feast for kings | .It is earth's humble supper – a feast for pilgrims      |
| It is a permanent enjoyment of salvation             | It is a temporal celebration of Christ's accomplishments |
| All believers will be there                          | Only a few believers are present                         |
| Its location is in heaven.                           | Its location is on earth.                                |
| None are absent                                      | Some are absent                                          |
| The table is the essence of salvation                | The Supper is a symbol of great things to come           |
| Believers will be one                                | There is some disunity                                   |
| The Table is perfection                              | The Supper is imperfect                                  |
| Christ will be seen in his perfection                | Christ is seen by faith                                  |

|                                          |                                    |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| There is no judgment at this table       | There is judgment at the Supper    |
| It is a reality that will be experienced | It is designed to stir the mind    |
| Participation is by conversion           | Participation is by sanctification |
| By grace we will be there.               | We receive grace by participation  |

**The Cup of Demons:**

There is also a contrast between that “cup of demons”--a witch’s brew full toe nails, frog’s tails, and cat’s eyes, which the modern Christian would do well to avoid; and, the Lord’s Cup.

Observe the contrast between the Lord’s Table and the Table of Demons (10:21) where we have a powerful disparity between good and evil, righteousness v. wickedness, Christ v. Satan, faith v. flesh, Biblical doctrine v. Satanic deception, truth v. the counterfeit.

Among the counterfeits of our time there are counterfeit gifts, fake faith healers, psychic prophets, new age practices, psycho heresy, unholy laughter, Sophia worship, gay clergy, matriarchal leadership in the church, devotion to the state, gender neutral Bibles, pornography, much of the entertainment industry, ecumenical movements, catholic celibacy, mysticism, magic, and the entertainment church.

## 25. Purity in the Camp

### Leviticus 13

Leprosy is a dreaded disease. One of the wretched things about leprosy is that a person loses feeling in infected areas so the individual does not feel pain. A leper literally cannot feel a rat chewing on his leprous toes while asleep in the middle of the night. It is not a disease anyone wants. Furthermore, it is contagious and can spread. There was always a danger of contagion endangering the public health of God’s people. In order to protect the health of the camp, public safety laws were enacted.

One of the lessons of this section (Lev. 13) is that uncleanness spreads; Holiness does not. Sin is contagious, holiness is not. Oh, that a parent’s devotion to Christ could be caught by children, but it is not!

In chapter 15, we have a graphic depiction of human uncleanness. Beds (15:4), clothes (15:6), persons (15:7), saddles (15:9), pottery (15:12), and everything touched by an unclean person spreads. Human nature defiles. For this reason, God's people had to be diligent about holiness. In the ESV, the word "holy" is used 91 times in Book of Leviticus.

Holiness is spiritual work. Uncleanness is natural. Holiness was a constant discipline. Uncleanness is effortless. Holiness, like energy in a closed system follows the law of entropy and tends to spoil and degenerate due to the activity of human nature. Just as disease robs people of health, sin robs people of the beauty of holiness. Holiness is to the spirit what health is to the body.

Two great concerns prevail in chapters thirteen and fourteen regarding the duties of a priest. First, was the purity of the camp, and second were the rights of the individual. God's camp had to be clean. Diseased persons proposed a threat to the general health of the nation. Because the health of the whole was more important than the individual, a person with an infectious disease was expelled from the camp and compelled to live alone outside the fellowship of Israel. However, God was also concerned about the rights of the individual. He guarded the physical weakness of a man lest his conditioned are misdiagnosed and the man lose his place in the assembly.

Before us are two concerns, the rights of the congregation and the rights of the individual. Holiness could not permit any to remain in the camp that had an infectious disease; Grace could not permit any one with an infirmity to be forced out of the camp who had a right to be in the camp. What a tragedy to allow an infectious person to roam the camp infecting others; what a tragedy to expel a weak person from the camp who did not have a disease.

Before us are some invaluable lessons for the church of Jesus Christ.

### **DUTY OF THE PRIEST**

First, we must look at the awesome responsibility of the priest. The job of identifying disease, making a diagnosis, and pronouncing his judgment rested on his shoulders. Note the text, "The Priest shall look upon him . . . the priest should look at him again . . . the priest shall look" (13:5-8). The priest had to the power to expel or preserve. No case was decided rashly. In many cases the priest would look at an infirmity of the flesh two or three or four times before making a judgment. Nothing was left to chance. Nothing was decided on hearsay.

Furthermore, the priest was not to be guided by his feelings, or his emotions, or his own opinions. Every point or feature of a disease was thoroughly expounded in God's Word. The priest did not need to get in touch with his feeling, but with the sure Word of God. If he knew God's Word, he would be preserved from making mistakes.

## **PURITY IN THE CAMP**

Second, we must look at the rights of the assembly. God's people had a right to assemble around the worship of YHWH and to be protected from disease. God's camp had to be clean. The people (13:1-46), their clothes (13:47-59), and their houses (14:33-57) had to be clean. Cleanness guaranteed one's right to remain in the camp to enjoy God and his people. Uncleanness threatened that fellowship, and therefore, the congregation had to be diligent about purging itself from infectious diseases.

Likewise, the church of Jesus Christ is God's temple (Ephesians 2) and the church is instructed to put out of the camp any who are actively engaging sin (1 Corinthians 5). The reason for this is a "little leaven, leavens the whole lump." Sin is contagious and a tolerant spirit for sin infects the whole Christian community. We saw an example of this in society in February 2004. When the Massachusetts court ruled that gay "marriage" must be allowed, hundreds of gay couples stormed the courthouse in San Francisco to get "married." Gay people started applying for marriage licenses in New Mexico, Colorado, and New York. The same can happen in a tolerant church. The tolerance of gossip, slander, drunkenness, and immorality can corrupt public morals. God's instruction was, "Purge out therefore the old leaven" (1 Corinthians 5:7). Holiness cannot tolerate sin's activity in the Church of Jesus Christ.

## **RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

Third, we must look at the rights of the individual. A red spot on the skin is not the same as leprosy. A weakness in the flesh is not the same as an infectious sore. While a leprous person had to be expelled from the camp in order to protect the whole of God's people, the priest was responsible to protect the weak individuals and not deprive them of their rights just because they were not in perfect health. Just as it would be a tragedy to retain a leprous person in the camp, it would be just as tragic to expel an imperfect individual from the church.

This principle can help us as church leaders. While a leader may not tolerate weakness in himself, he must tolerate weakness among the brethren. Likewise, leaders must not tolerate open rebellion, gossip, slander, fraud, or immorality in him or among the saints.

Every individual must be on guard against his own weakness lest it deteriorate into some kind of sin that might disqualify one from service or fellowship. Every Christian must learn not to tolerate people who call themselves a believer who is engaged in some type of immoral behavior. Each Christian must learn, however, to tolerate human weakness whether that is an ill temper, over exuberance, virility of spirit, talking too much, depression of spirit,

cowardliness, aggressiveness and the like. Our rule should be to tolerate human infirmities, but do not tolerate malfeasance or rebellion.

Summary: These chapters are about clean bodies, clean garments, and clean houses. God's camp had to be clean because God is holy. The purification rites in the Levitical period set Israel apart from other nations. They are a shadow of the moral holiness God desires to have among His people in all ages.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (2 Corinthians 6:17).

God instructed his people to avoid being "unequally yoked" with unbelievers. Covenants, contracts, compacts, and voluntary association with unbelievers, including government adherence contracts, can normalize sinful behavior if a Christian does not have his guard up. Separation is a doctrine of Scripture, and the believer is called to be "come out," and "to separate." This does not mean believers are to be isolated and aloof from non-Christians. It simply means Christians are not to model unbelievers and their sinful patterns.

### **Application**

In the church of Jesus Christ, Christians are called to exercise two opposing virtues: holiness and love.

**First**, the church is called to be holy. As a holy church, believers are called to be clean and pure (1 Peter 1:15-18; 2:55ff). Purity demands a certain intolerance toward aberrant behaviors. In Romans 16:17, the church was exhorted to turn away from those causing divisions and dissensions in the church due to doctrinal teaching inconsistent with the gospel of Christ. This does not mean Bible teachers cannot hold two different interpretations on a passage, but it does mean one has to be careful about the way one advances his position on a particular text. It is a divisive attitude when one thinks, "It's my way or the highway."

In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul instructed the church not to associate with believers who were involved in immorality, covetousness (theft), idolatry, reviling (slandering), drunkenness, or swindling (defrauding). These kinds of sins ought not to be named among the saints. When a person engages these types of sins, there is leprosy in the camp (leaven at work) and that person must be expelled from the camp.

In Titus 3:9, 10, Paul exhorted Titus to reject a divisive person; that is, to expel them from the fellowship. No church or organization can survive a division or split when they have an individual that is not committed to the unity of the body of Christ.



This does not mean there are not some things worth splitting a church over. For example, in July 2003, the Episcopalian Church ordained a homosexual to the bishopric. In this case, holiness demands the expulsion of the man and or church and or district from the denomination in order to purge the church of evil. This is an issue worth splitting a denomination over because it is blatantly evil. But, it is not worth splitting a church over the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's left toe. Paul had this idea in mind when he said to the Romans on food laws, "do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food" (14:20).

**Secondly**, not only is the church called to be holy; it is called to be loving and gracious.

While we cannot tolerate leaven or moral leprosy in our midst, we must learn to tolerate human weakness. In grace, God allowed imperfect people in His camp. Paul said, "We who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves." (Romans 15:1). What does it mean "to bear" weaknesses? The word "bear" means "to carry;" that is, to carry the pressure, the weight, the difficulty, the hardship of their weakness. It implies we are to protect one another and to make sure others are not allowed to pick at and criticize the weakness of our brothers. To bear one another's weaknesses calls us to protect one another from allowing weakness to dominate the individual or the community of believers. A brother who is intense may also be prone to anger. Anger may be a weakness, and the angry brother must be guarded lest his weakness erupt and defile the whole church. A very social person who may delight everyone with her wit and wisdom may also have a weakness toward gossiping about others. A gossip can destroy relationships. That tendency must be guarded and a little reminder will go a long way in preventing that weakness from crossing the line into the area of gossip. Grace protects. Grace endures. Grace tolerates.

In conclusion, the lessons of this chapter are absolutely profound. Because God is holy, sin cannot be tolerated. Because God is gracious, weakness must be tolerated. A church would do well to hold these two virtues in dynamic tension and to exercise both virtues as life unfolds before us. Knowing when to release holiness and when to release grace can make the difference between a healthy and unhealthy church.

## 26. Church Discipline

### 1 Corinthians 5



Figure 20: Freepik

This chapter authorizes the Church of Jesus Christ to excommunicate unrepentant, law-breakers from their community. But, in order to do so, church leaders must grasp the principles of proper church discipline and have the courage to execute discipline in this permissive, tolerant society.

***1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.***

Apparently, Sosthenes reported a case in Corinth to the Apostle where a young man took his father's young widow to be his bride.

When Paul heard about the account, he was in a state of shock because such debauchery was not even rumored among the gentiles. Paul condemned this act of incest and placed this repulsive act in the category of sins known as "fornication" or *porneia*.

***2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.***

Paul's shock continues. Not only was he stunned to hear of this act of incest, he was astonished at the Corinthians arrogance (puffed up) and casual response to this sin. Conduct opposed to fundamental morality called for grief, mourning, and discipline, and not over-indulgent love and tolerance.

***3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,***

Because Paul was mature in the things of God, he was able to see this issue clearly. Therefore, he pronounced judgment on this man's wicked behavior and denounce it as sin.



Figure 21: Source unknown

***4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,***

Paul introduces the discipline that churches can follow when they have a member that violates God's law. When a church member is living in a sin mentioned in this chapter, initiate the following steps:

**Step One:** Identify the sinful behavior and label it correctly. The church is concerned with conduct, not thoughts.

**Step Two:** Confront the man directly and call him to repentance. If he does not repent, go to step three.

**Step Three:** At a meeting of the whole church, invoke the name of the Lord, and formally and officially hand the sinner over to Satan in the name of the Lord for the destruction of the flesh.

*5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

The word “*deliver*” (*parodidomai*) to give or deliver over a prisoner into the custody of another.

To “*deliver one . . . unto Satan*” is a formal prayer and declaration by the church that the church is removing their protective prayers from the transgressor.

The term “*destruction*” of the flesh refers to Satan’s power to punish and even kill the erring brother.

*6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

The “*glorying*” or boasting of the Corinthians about their love, tolerance of evil, and patience degraded into a sin of the church.

*7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:*

The metaphor “*leaven*” is employed to communicate the infectiousness of sin. Holiness is not contagious, but sin contaminates everyone who tolerates it. Discipline is necessary so the whole church can be healthy and unleavened.

*8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Paul presents this young church with “*a very deep and penetrating view of what the Christian life is, how it is sustained, and what it demands*” (MacLaren).

“*The feast*” refers to the Lord’s Supper (a.k.a. communion, *Eucharist*, breaking of bread) which the Lord instituted the night before He was betrayed to replace the Passover Meal. The Passover was merely a shadow of the cross where His body was broken and His blood was shed for our sins.

It is a feast because the symbols of the bread and the wine invoke reflection of God’s breathtaking banquet at the table of salvation provided by the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (Exodus 12: Luke 22:7-38).

“**let us keep the feast**” (a present, active volitive subjunctive): The Apostle exhorts the Corinthians to join the whole Christian community world-wide to remember Christ and His accomplishments at Calvary, but to do so without leaven.

Most likely Paul was thinking of the Hebrew tradition of women performing spring house cleaning while carefully going through the cupboards removing every fragment of leaven before the Passover Meal – a marvelous shadow-picture of sanctification in the Christian life – a walk which requires all believers to be holy and to eliminate traces of leaven in their own heart and mind.

The “**old Leaven**” is a symbol of the sinner’s old life and habits of sin. Believers, in their walk with God, are required to forsake all vestiges of the Adamic life in order to please Him.

*“Neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness.”* The term “*malice*” refers to “*mens rea*” or evil intentions – the secret motivations of the mind and heart. Wickedness refers to the conduct of habitual practicing sin during this pilgrimage on earth.

Positively, believers are ordered to keep the feast with “**the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth;**” that is, to replace the leaven of malice and wickedness with sincerity and truth.

Because the shadows of the Passover were fulfilled in the Christ-event, God has granted to Christians the authority to make all of life a festival – a gala whereby believers put off the old man and to put on the new man; to remove the grave clothes of selfishness and to wear the regalia of righteousness that feature the beauty of holiness and the golden attributes of love. We don’t have to be dirty. We can live clean every day.

### ***9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:***

Apparently, Paul wrote a previous letter to the Corinthians which has not been preserved. One of the major purposes of that letter was to communicate to the church to separate themselves from sin and to avoid companions with defiling habits.

The word “*company*” (*sunanamignusthai*) has to do with close friendship and association. Obviously, Paul is NOT ordering the Christians to withdraw from all sinners or they “*must needs go out of the world.*” Rather, he orders the saints to remain an “arms distance” from sinners practicing the sins in verse 10; and, to disassociate from so-called Christian “brethren” trapped in one of these behaviors.

**Step Five:** Some holy man / pastor / elder in the church needs to admonish the flock to disassociate and separate themselves (in a social sense) from unrepentant people engaged in any of the sinful behaviors described in this chapter.

**Step Six:** Excommunicate the erring member from the church and the privileges of church membership. This is done in love for the good of the “black sheep” in

order to bring them to repentance; and, for the good of the church that other members might not be infected by the same sins. This final step is a public step that must be executed in a way that honors Christ and protects the privacy rights of the transgressor; that is, make your words brief, accurate, and honorable.

Consider developing church discipline policies before they have to be executed, and then consign the duties of church discipline to a mature, ruling elder who knows how to discipline members for the glory of God with a view of protecting privacy rights of the transgressor.

***10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.***

The apostle limits his order in his previous statement (letter). Disassociation from transgressors in the world is not totally possible, but it is possible to disconnect socially from transgressing Christian brothers.

Paul is **not** calling the Christians at Corinth to separate from weak brethren, struggling brethren, imperfect brethren, erring brethren, or people with peccadillos, but from unrepentant brethren engaged in any of the following mortal-sins:

**Fornication** ( *pornos* ) includes any forbidden sexual act: casual sex with the opposite sex, prostitution, rape, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, transvestitism, crossdressing, lewdness, and possibly porn addiction. (Note: pornography is an in-your-face public nuisance, but a self-confessed porn enthusiast may need prayer and accountability more than he / she needs church discipline).

**Covetousness** ( *pleonektais = overreachers* ) is not referring to “desires” or “thoughts” but to specific conduct: stealing, extortion, burglary, larceny, robbery, vandalism, fraud, pickpocketing, filching, pilfering, and any act that deprives another of his property or the value of his property.

**Extortion** ( *harpax* ) is the practice of obtaining something, especially money, through force or threats: blackmail, intimidation, coercion, duress, bullying, and generally menacing a victim.

(**Warning:** extortioners and the covetous people dress nicely and often engage in the practice of slander to deflect people’s attention away from them to another.)

**Idolatry** ( *idololatrais* ) includes taking pay for obscene acts, engaging in commercial schemes, fraud, practicing rites associated with the cults, practicing pop psychology, worshipping the Zodiac or fake science, addiction to pornography, hoarding as a pack rat, obtaining tattoos, addiction to drugs or alcohol, obsession with vanity, politics, health, or other cultural fads.

Again, Paul's concern is not with peccadillos, bad manners, or foibles but with transgressions of God's law by adult members of the church. Disobedience by children is in the jurisdiction of the family and should be handled by the family where possible.

***11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.***

Paul repeats himself. He is not ordering people to disassociate from all transgressors, but ONLY from professing believers who habitually violate God's law.

**Railing** (*loidoros*) includes gossip, blasphemy, slander, defamation, libel, smears, aspersions, calumny, muckraking and any other malicious conduct that murders the reputation of a man.

Note: Telling the truth about another when the truth needs to be told, howbeit unflattering, is not railing. There is an appropriate place and time to tell the ugly truth about a transgressor. But, casual, informal muckraking is not acceptable.

**Drunkard** (*methusos*) includes any addiction to alcohol, food, drugs, soft drinks, or other substances that control the man causing him to be a danger to himself and others.

***12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?***

The "I" is Paul and those who are likewise committed to Christ. Since the church ONLY has *in personam* jurisdiction over church members and subject-matter jurisdiction over the conduct-actions of its members, Paul limits the discipline of excommunication and disassociation to those within a church fellowship. This social-judicial authority does not extend past the church doors into the community.

***13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.***

Paul adopts the formalities of a judge and pronounces the sentence to have these habitual sinners expelled from the church. The adverb "*without*" (*exo*) refers to members of society that are outside the jurisdiction of the ecclesia.

As to the sins of those without, it is God's job to deal with them as He's sees fit; that is, it is none of the church's business what they do or don't do. But sinning members within the fellowship of the local body are within the jurisdiction of church law, and those "wicked persons" must be "put away" (*exairo*) and driven out of the assembly.

Therefore, let us keep the feast with unleavened bread.

## 27. Church Courts

### 1 Corinthians 6

When sheep blather and butt heads, there has to be an effective and ethical way to resolve differences.

The Apostle, therefore, introduces the Corinthians to their authority as a church of Jesus Christ to set up a church court, to bind disputants to a contract, and to follow the rules of Biblical equity in order to bring resolution to warring factions.

#### The Background:



Figure 22:Freepik

The church at Corinth was born in a political storm. Paul, ejected from the Roman Synagogue Corporation, established a free church at the house of Justus.

Later, the corporati, led by Sosthenes, arrested Paul, hauled him into a Roman Maritime Court overseen by Gallio, a Roman appointed governor. Gallio recognizing bad faith among the Jews and the frivolous charges against Paul, dismissed the case

with prejudice.

When Sosthenes exhibited contempt for the court, Gallio ordered his Greek bailiffs to escort the contumacious Jew(s) out of his chambers. Taking leave of the court, the Greek bailiffs punished Sosthenes with a severe beating. The good news is that Sosthenes repented, believed, and was reconciled to the Apostle (Acts 18-1-18; 1 Corinthians 1:1).

One of the issues at Corinth was, "How do squabbling Christians in a baby church solve disputes?" The converted Jews in the church and many Greeks thought the better part of wisdom was to take their discord to one of the Roman admiralty tribunals. This being the traditional, acceptable custom of solving

conflicts, Paul had to introduce the Corinthians to their authority as an ecclesia under Christ to set up a church court to resolve issues between head-butting brethren.

### **The Apostle's First Rebuke**

1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

Paul is asking, "What kind of insanity has come over the sheep that the sheep want the wolves do decide what's best for the flock?" What kind of deception has come over righteous men to think they can find justice before the unrighteous; i.e., justice before a carnal, fleshly, duplicitous, power-seeker who is accustomed to taking bribes? Aren't the "saints" (holy ones) capable of measuring disputations against the standard of God's just law?

The word "*dare*" (*tolma*) means "to act so boldly."

The term "*matter*" (*pragma*) refers to deeds and transaction in commerce. We get the word "pragmatic" from the term "*pragma*." "Matters" does not include differences about ideas, theology, or politics. Courts are not set up to settle philosophical differences or to resolve political questions. Courts are useful when the magisterium have to discern the right and wrong of behavior and matters involving contract violations.

The court, however, has no authority to judge criminal matters. Crime is under the jurisdiction of the State.

Paul's searching question reveals a chasm between Christian law and Roman law. Roman judges were not fit to adjudicate affairs involving morals, true righteousness and equity.

***2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?***

The word "*judge*" (*krino*) means "to esteem, divide, chose, pick, or approve" that is, judges approve or disapprove of actions based on a given-set of standards.

"*To judge the world*" refers the promise Christ gave to His personal followers (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:30).

"*Smallest matters*" refers to small, clear, manageable, trivial concerns at law. Here, Paul exudes with confidence that believers are capable of settling disputes among citizens in the kingdom on earth.

Because God is the One and Only Lawgiver (James 4:12), and saints are saved in order to practice the law (Romans 8:4). Paul infers "*saints*" (*hagion*) are being equipped for the task of judging the world. Since all believers are "lawyers in



training,” are not these apprentices of law capable of judging minor disputes between head-butting sheep?

Paul asks a searching question: “Are you Corinthians unworthy (anaxios) or unfit to sit on the bench?” Some saints are equipped to judge controversial matters. Other are not qualified to rule on matters of controversy. Baby Christians are not good choices to resolve disputes. Antinomians need not apply to be a judge in church disputes for they do not recognize God’s law as the standard of Christian conduct.

***3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?***

Again, Paul reveals his confidence that the Corinthians were capable of solving their own problems. Why Paul speaks of angels is a matter of controversy. Some think the saints will judge the behavior of fallen angels.

Possibly, Paul is injecting vigor and moral determination into the Corinthians by informing them that they are saved, moral-creatures being conformed to the image of God capable of judging angelic beings.

If Christians born of the Spirit are being conformed to the image of Christ, don’t they have the moral capacity to judge angels and matters in another dimension? Aren’t they equipped to judge right and wrong here on earth now?

***4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.***

“Ye have” means to possess.

“Judgments of things pertaining to this life” refers to the jurisdiction of the saints – the official authority given to them “to take dominion” of controversies on earth. This being so, the “least esteemed” in the church are said to be capable of rendering fair decisions. Paul’s poise and fearlessness at appointing the shy and quiet members of the church to be judges is nothing short of astounding. He is not advising the saints at Corinth to make “pastors” judges, but common, willing members of the congregation.

Paul offers a solution: why not set up a church court?

Surely, there is a friend, or deacon, or pastor than can discern God’s will on this matter.

### **The Apostle’s Second Rebuke**

***5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? 6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.***

Apparently, the Corinthians didn't share Paul's confidence about the ability of saints to judge earthly matters.

The "shame" in this congregation was that the Corinthians boasted about having superior gifts and being better than one another, yet, they could not identify one member in the church that had the moral character and the ethical capacity to perform the functions of a judge.

Apparently, when matters hit a road block, Christian men dragged their disputes before Roman tribunals composed of atheists and carnal men who served a different god and different system of law.

When God's white sheep go before wolves wearing black they need to be rebuked. And, this is what the apostle is doing here.

### **The Apostle's Third Rebuke and Initial Remedy**

*7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?*

The noun "fault" (*hettma*) refers to a flaw, a diminution, or a failure. Paul is saying the very fact you Corinthians have disputes reveals your failures as Christian men to live graciously. On top of that you are "dumb" enough to take your controversies to wolves for settlement.

The word "wrong" refers to some awareness of minor-injustice short of a crime – something of no real consequence.

The word "defrauded" refers to matters of money and some sort of minor commercial loss . . . an unforeseen expense or feeling of deprivation. Were not the Corinthians acting like children demanding perfection to the penny?

Since going to a secular court to solve market place differences among Christian business partners is the spiritual tragedy of this community. Paul suggests a simple solution: Why not just absorb the loss and spare the church from smears and slurs from the secular establishment.

Again, we are not talking about criminal intent or a "guilty mind" (*mens rea*). Paul is addressing some type of inadvertent bereavement by one party in an action regarding the other party. Crimes (serious injuries to one's person or property) and the extent of *mens rea* must be taken to secular courts that are trained to handle crimes.

*8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.*

The apostle continues his Third Rebuke: It is wrong to take these trivial commercial matters to a Roman Tribunal.

The phrase “do wrong” (*adikeo*) refers to a sober breach of God’s laws. Taking “disputes” among Christians to secular magistrates is a serious violation of faith – a sin with profound consequences.

The term “defraud” refers to a willful, stubborn refusal to settle a dispute in favor of the injured party. Why not absorb the loss and save the Lord’s name, the Apostle asks (6:7)?

*Psalm 37:21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.*

### **Pragmatics:**

When it comes to disputes among brethren, the remedies are as follows:

Address the issue and absorb minor loses. For the parties to sit down and to calmly discuss the issue with the intent of coming to a reasonable remedy satisfactory to both parties. Go to a competent friend in the church and ask them to moderate the dispute .Go to a deacon or elder in the church and ask them to moderate the dispute. For serious matters of significant consequences, ask the Pastor or board of the church to set up an voluntary ecclesiastical court. It should be made up of at least three willing judges where the voluntary litigants must sign a binding contract to abide by the decision of the ecclesiastical court. For bigger churches, setting up an ecclesiastical court with simple and fair laws, procedures, contracts, rules of the court, and standards of etiquette for litigants may be necessary to stay within these apostolic guidelines.

## **28. Judgment Must Begin at the House of God**

*1 Peter 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*

### **Part I**

#### *Judgment MUST Begin at the House of God*

### **Introduction**

Is there any doubt that we are living in perilous times, and that judgment on our nation appears imminent?

Prayer and Bible reading has been outlawed in public schools (1962). The Supreme Court has sanctioned the butchering of babies (1973) and Sodomy (June 26, 2015). Pornography dominates the internet. Millions of Illegal immigrants have stolen their way into the United States and are changing the character of the nation. The nation is trillions of dollars in debt. Daily we hear reports of police brutality and shootings of unarmed citizens by trigger-ready cops. Monuments of the Ten Commandments, confederate heroes, and the Bars and Stars are being expunged from the Bible Belt by Northern, liberal hatemongers. History is being rewritten to reflect political correctness. Muslims stain our cities, and our nation is making pacts with Islamic countries to develop nuclear weapons. Radical feminists dominate the media, the home, and politics. Christian business men who do not cater to Homos and Lesbos are charged with crimes against the State and mercilessly fined. We sense the judgment of God is near.

Our text informs us, however, that judgment must begin at the House of God before wrath is unleashed on the citadels of wickedness.

The fires of justice must first purge the church before the flames cauterize pagans. Christians must face God's judgment in advance of God's burning wrath upon Christ-rejectors. The sheep have to be cleansed before the goats are butchered.

The blame for our nation's demise must be laid at the feet of the church.

Chuck Baldwin wrote:

*When America is lying in the graveyard of history, the epitaph on its tombstone will read, "Here lies the United States of America: killed by the apathy and indifference of its pastors and churches."*

Charles Finney would agree that the problem is in the pulpit, not in the White House:

*"If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the public press lacks moral discernment, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the church is degenerate and worldly, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the world loses its interest in Christianity, the pulpit is responsible for it. If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it. If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it."*

Because Christians have squandered their liberty, neglected their obligation as sons of light to expose the deeds of darkness (Ephesians 5:11), fled public duties, and plunged into the sins of the age, the gates of hell are at peace.

It is difficult to tell the difference between God's dirty, gray sheep and shaggy goats. The nation has returned to paganism and the morals of Jezebels and pimps. Judgment must begin at the House of God.

### **Observations About the Text**

*1 Peter 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*

**First**, judgment is God's duty. He is the Judge (Genesis 18:26; Isaiah 2:4), and He rules the world with righteousness (Psalm 9:8). Peter informs us that the non-Christian man "will give account to Him Who is ready to judge the living and dead" (4:5).

**Second**, judgment has priority. The text informs us that judgment commences with the House of God. God has an interest in cleansing His church and purifying His people. The principle is derived from Ezekiel 9:6 where God instructs the executioners to "begin at my sanctuary." Here the tares were separated from the wheat, and the goats from the sheep. Godless pretenders were executed.

**Third**, judgment begins with the true church. Peter says it must start with "us" meaning the believing community; that is, good Christian men must be the first to stand before the Bar.

**Fourth**, the judgment here is not punishment for sins. God forbid. Since Christ died for sins there is not one drop of wrath left for believing men.

The judgment here is not payback for sins committed, but the cleansing and purging of sin from our life and conduct that "we may not be condemned with the world" (1 Corinthians 11:32); that is, judgment upon God's people is designed to make them better, not bitter; to purify and cleanse, not to punish and condemn; to equip for service, not to encumber duty.

Call it "child training," "chastisement," or "discipline," but do not call it "punishment."

**Fifth**, judgment upon the House of God is painful. Peter calls it a "fiery trial" (1:7; 4:12) that involves suffering in the flesh (4:1), walking on the road of holiness and Christian service (4:4-11), testing (4:12), sharing in the sufferings of Christ (4:14), general hardship for bearing the name of Christ (4:16), and for specific obedience to the will of God (4:19).

**Sixth**, judgment is not only for the purification of the saints, judgment glories God (4:16). We know that a man who does not judge his own sins certainly does not have a right to pass judgment on the sins of others.

How can God condemn the pagans if His own people commit the same iniquity as Godless men? A jury would crucify a judge that condemned a common thief while he was committing embezzlement.

Likewise, Americans are intolerant of cops that engage in prejudice against race. Contempt for hypocrisy is as American as apple pie, and rightly so. The fact that the Lord judges sins in His own House vindicates His condemnation of unbelievers and absolves Him of the accusation of bias.

When God's people judge their own sins, come clean, and walk on the path of righteousness, they hasten the coming of the Lord (2 Peter 3:11-12); that is, don't expect the Lord to come and judge the pagans until God's dirty gray sheep become wooly-white and devoted to Christ.

Finally, how do we know when judgment is near? We know that judgment on the wicked is near when God's people zealously denounce their own sins and renew obedience to the Word of God (3:13-17).

We know judgment is near when fire enters at the house of God and Christians experience persecution for Christ.

Terms like "reviled" and "suffering as a Christian" inform us that disciplinary judgment has arrived (4:12-15).

When the Lord's white sheep are dirty gray, the black sheep feel more comfortable; but, when the Lord's gray sheep become wooly white, the black sheep are embarrassed and ashamed. The lawless man hates law keepers.

When God's people surrender to God's law-order and advance God's claim upon man's institutions, the wicked come out of their caves of iniquity like a colony of vampire bats. Thus, when Christians are legally prosecuted by evil men, we know God's prosecution of the wicked is just around the corner.

Legal assaults on the honorable confederate battle flag, the demolition of monuments dedicated to noble heroes like Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, or President Jefferson Davis, the removal of the monuments to the Ten Commandments from government buildings, elimination of the use of "Merry Christmas" by the Zionist media, prosecution of Christian chaplains for praying in the name of Jesus, operations of the big, LGBT hate machine targeting Christians bakers or pizza makers for refusal to sign contracts with fags and perverts are premonitory signs that God is perfecting His church and that judgment against a perverted nation thunders in the distance.

What is the cure for Lipstick Pastors and Petticoat Christians? It would be best if the church would holy up and cleanse itself, but if not, God has a cure for weak, feminine Christianity.

**Fiery trials and persecution!**

## Part II

### *Judgment MUST Begin at the House of God*

Why Must Judgment Come on the Church?

The purpose of judgment is not only to punish the wicked, but to perfect the saints.

The Spirit commissioned John the Baptist to make “*smooth in the desert a highway for our God.*” Valleys had to be “*lifted up*” and “*hills made low*” (Isaiah 4:3-4); that is, God seeks to deal with sins of omission (valleys) and sins of commission (hills).

The character of the Christians must become more Christ-like, more holy, and less like the character of the age in which men live.

In 1 Peter chapter three and four, the apostle issues commands to God’s people undergoing a “*fiery trial*” (4:12); that is, “*put ons*” and “*put offs*,” virtues to assume and evils to avoid; positive virtues to seek, and negative vices to shun. Let’s take a look at them:

#### **Virtues to Seek**

Fiery trials have a tendency to bring the worst out of us and to expose our bosom sins.

Therefore, the Apostle Peter tells the people how he wants them to respond under suffering and persecution. The positive commands expose positive fruit that needs to be on our branches during times when pagan desires rule mankind (4:1-5).

Five virtues (adjectives) that should mark God’s people are issued by the apostle in 1 Peter 3:8:

**Like mindedness** (3:8): Fiery trials have a tendency to isolate and separate Christians. Adversaries seek to “*divide and conquer.*” While Christians lean toward a spirit of independence under adversity, God wants his sheep to be communal, to stay together, and to have one mind and one purpose. It takes work to be “*like minded,*” and it takes men surrendered to the sufficiency of Scripture to have correct thinking.

**Sympathy:** The word means “*to share the same feeling.*” It is the opposite of being censorious and judgmental.

Gerry Spence, the great American lawyer, says his goal in training lawyers is to rebuild “*feelings*” within students of law. Only when they feel the pain of their clients will they work to set them free. In our jural, independent, legal society, sympathy is as rare as an Arkansas hillbilly with all his teeth.

During July 2015, two events dominated the news: the harvesting of baby parts by Planned Parenthood in the U.S., and the death of Cecil the Lion by two American hunters in Zimbabwe. New articles abounded. The whole world was calling for the arrest and punishment of the lion killers, but only a handful of people were upset by the sale of over-the-counter aborted baby hearts, livers, and lungs.

As illustrated in the story of the Good Samaritan, Christians are often like the priest and the Levite that “pass by on the other side” of hurting, wounded men. Sympathy for the pains and sorrows of suffering saints is evidence of a whole, healthy man. Genuine love and concern for afflicted saints must be cultivated.

Personal pain educates us and enables us to feel what others feel.

Thus, trials help us to be more compassionate and less judgmental of those in bonds and afflictions.

**Brotherly love:** Men tend to avoid pain. People under fiery trials are often fearful and foaming with doubt. The natural man prefers to be around positive, happy people.

Peter sees a need for Christian men to pray for those in bonds, to bear one another’s burdens, to assist the captured with duties, to forgive and build each other up in the most holy faith. See also 1 Peter 4:8-11.

Tenderhearted: The sun that melts the wax also hardens the clay. Fiery trial can harden hearts or melt hard hearts. Peter wants God’s people to be tender, gentle, kind, caring, and emotionally involved in the affliction of others.

**Humility:** The word means “humble minded.” Class societal structures have always existed in society. Men and women, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, white and black live on different economic tiers. These barriers hinder service one to another. But, humility breaks through all the artificial walls that men erect between each other. Like our Lord condescended to earth to be a servant to men, Paul wants Christians to think and act like the Lord with all humility and condescension.

Peter continues to admonish believers on character development.

**Devotion to Christ:** “*Sanctify*” the “Lord in your hearts” (3:15):

Have you ever noticed that when you are around Christians that they talk about the weather, sports, business, or food? Men and women alike speak what’s on their heart. For men, it may be the latest football game, and for women, it may be the tastiest recipe for an avocado dip.

I was at a restaurant strategically placed between five churches having a Bible study with a friend when the owner came up to us and asked if we were Christians. We answered in the affirmative and a short conversation broke out.



I asked the owner how often she saw Christians studying the Bible in her diner. She said, "Never!"

Truth be known, many Christians are in love with basketball and apple pie. They would rather talk about health and wealth than Christ and Scripture.

To break man's love affair with the things of this life, and to renew Christian love for the Lord, judgment must begin at the House of God. Personal suffering causes men to release their grip on earthly things, and to strengthen their grip on heavenly things.

The word "*sanctify*" means "*to make holy*" or "*to set apart*" Christ in the inner man. Only when Christ is our love, our joy, our "all in all" can we achieve God's purpose for our lives and to offer a defense (apologia) for the hope we have in Him. Peter wants believers to be totally devoted to the Savior; to hold "stuff" lightly, and to hold kingdom purposes tightly.

***Genesis 45:20 Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.***

**A clear conscience** (3:16): "*to have a good conscience.*"

One of the purposes of fiery trials is to create a "good conscience;" that is, one that works correctly. A good conscience is like a smoke detector that goes off when smoke fills the air.

Like Achan, Christians often have Babylonian garments hidden in their tent; i.e., bosom sins to which they cling. Lust and greed sear the conscience. Judgment exposes the idolatrous heart and its secret sins; that is, God wants His people to come clean and to forsake their sins lest they be disciplined for their wayward hearts.

**Toughen up** (4:1): "*since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind.*"

Today's largest churches have been feminized. Petticoat Christians are being fed "boo-boo bear, honey coated, sugar bomb prosperity sermons by lipstick pastors.

Consequently, Christians don't have the strength of chocolate syrup to stand up to the big gay hate machine, the control-freaks in Congress hell bent on regulating how many nickels one has in their piggy bank.

About 70% of the country claims to be Christian, yet the whole country is controlled by tribalist Zios which make up less than 2% of the population; that is, sweet, nice conservative Christians tolerate Godless, professional socialists to lead the nation.

But, when these liberals express their intolerance of Christians and begin to arrest them for their anti-gay speech and possession of guns, maybe the Christian community will man-up and organize resistance to these tribal Jews.

Christians need be tougher than telegraph wire. Like Joseph in prison, fiery trials have a way of fusing steel into one's soul.

Christians must learn to say "No" to the lusts of men, and when Christian weave this iron thread into the fiber of their soul, the difference between ball bearing believers and egg-shell Christians stands out like the Dorothy in Munchkin Land (4:2-5).

**Be sensible** (4:7): *"The end of all things is near, be of sound judgment and watch unto prayer."*

The word "sober" or "sound judgment" refers to "self-control" and sensibility.

Sensible is the opposite of emotional. People are creatures of passion and impulse. Advertisers know the power of suggestion and employ some sixty "buy me now" messages in thirty minutes of radio and T.V. programming. It takes no character to "follow your feeling," but it takes maturity to do what is prudent. It takes maturity to pray correctly.

Fiery trials have a way of burning up the chaff in our life and help us get to the core of "Thy will be done."

**Rejoicing** (4:13): *"Keep on rejoicing"* is a present, active imperative implying that God wants Christians to continue to rejoice in the gospel even in painful trials.

We have great joy in a full bank account, a packed refrigerator, a new car, and a remodeled house. We tend to be depressed when we can't have all the stuff we want. Fiery trials force us to flee a burning house; to take our eyes off things below and to look to things above.

**Trust** (4:19): *". . . entrust their souls to a faithful creator doing what is right."*

Peter interpreted these fiery trials reaching the level of martyrdom wherein the Godless State would imprison Christians and execute them because their loyalty to Christ was interpreted as treason to the polytheistic State. Peter instructs believers how to die well by "committing their souls to the Creator" under the probability of execution. Peter wanted the type of Christianity wherein men would rather die for Christ than to live for comfort.

## Part III

### *Judgment MUST Begin at the House of God*

Judgment comes upon the church to teach it to shun evil.

## Vices to Avoid

Just as the apostle wants believers to pursue virtue during fiery trials, God's judgment causes Christians to shed vices under the eye of the Eternal Judge. Consider Peter's imperatives and the following prohibitions from which the believer must be released:

**Revenge** (3:8): "*not repaying evil for evil or reviling for reviling . . .*"

The context is the generation of love in the Christian community. The verbal participle is used in the imperative sense.

The "*not*" in this verse is in the emphatic position prohibiting the practice of revenge. Unregenerate men return evil for evil and sometimes evil for good. When adversaries cast aspersions as us, we are tempted to use a few hand gestures and to hurl some pelvic terms in the direction of mouthy opponents.

Peter commands the impossible; that is, to render a blessing to those who bring pain into our lives. Only by the power of God can such a life be lived.

He is not, however, telling believers to be whimpettes in a contest of Ideas.

Even Jesus called the Jewish theologians "*hypocrites*" and "*white-washed sepulchers*." Christians have a right, even a duty, to master the art of the insult as they exercise their First Amendment right to defend Christianity and to defeat bad ideas.

We all have unthinking friends who are a few eggs short of dozen.

Christians must not let soggy, conceited, arrogant, supercilious statements by egotistical professorial pundits go unchallenged.

Christians need to jump into political debates and deliver some punchy fiery balls of death into the face of perverts and statist.

We need the spirit of Lucy in Peanuts who once said, "these five fingers . . . individually are nothing, but when I curl them together like this into a single unit, they form a weapon that is terrible to behold."

Verbal abuse (3:10): "*keep his tongue from evil*." Again, Peter is not censoring thoughtful, vigorous debate in the contest of ideas.

Rather, he exhorts believers to vigorously shun fleshly, emotional, below the belt bad-mouthing that is so common with carnal rednecks who are known for their fire-cracker responses common to bar room vulgarity.

Yes, we live in a nation with free speech. No, Peter not trying to censor free speech. Rather, he wants Christians to replace carnal pelvic rhetoric with more intelligent colorful mechanisms of speech. It is better to let someone think you are an idiot than to open your mouth and prove it.

No, I don't think you are stupid. You just have a bad luck when thinking.

**Fear** (3:14): *“Do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled.”* Peter quoted this text because sheep are not known for their courage. Churchy people are often paralyzed with fear before cops, judges, the IRS, and public officials.

Mark Twain identified the problem, “It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare.”

The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for Christians to cower like whipped puppies and do nothing. The Bible condemns men and women whose wagon is harnessed to fear.

Knee-knocking does not become true Christians. Judgment begins at the house of God to deliver His people from trepidation that they might be righteous and “bold as lion” (Proverbs 28:1).

Fleshly indulgence (4:1-3): “The time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.”

The chastisements of Almighty God are painful and strenuous. They reveal imperfections in our spirit and character—our unwillingness to resist sin unto death.

When we long for relief, the tendency is to plunge into fleshly pleasures—to give up and pursue a course of sensuality. It is too easy to prefer iniquity to affliction (Job 36:21).

Thus, one of the purposes of fiery trials is to expose bosom sins and to free believers from lusts that lord over them.

Truth be known, Christians are as addicted to pornography, drugs, and alcohol as much as the pagans.

Judgment, therefore, must begin with the House of God.

**Surprise** (4:12): We have another prohibition, *“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you.”*

The word *“surprised”* means “to be astonished or amazed.” It exposes a deficiency of mind; i.e., the want of a warrior heart and a soldier's attitude.

Marines are not shocked when they are fired upon, but civilians are.

Unfortunately, Americans grow up thinking life is all about having fun and “being all you can be.” Thus, American Christians are unprepared for war and conflict.

*“Onward Christian Soldiers”* is a foreign concept to younger believers.

In the first few centuries of Christianity when Christians were baptized, the pastor / priests would put salt on the tongues of new converts as a symbol they were enemies of the government and had better be prepared to die for Christ.

It's time to pass the salt again!

**Common law crimes** (4:15): “ . . . *But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.*”

In Peter's mind, suffering was the norm, and he was instructing believers how to suffer well.

However, another prohibition is announced.

Christians were permitted to resist Godless authorities, to be charged and imprisoned for their Christian faith. But, they were not permitted to break the Ten Commandments, or break faith with their neighbors.

Christian law can be summed up in one principle, “Do your neighbor no harm.” They could break a man-made statute, but they could not break God's law. Persecution broke forth on these believers, not because they were doing something wrong, but because they were doing something right. And, suffering for righteousness is permitted. Damaging property and injuring a neighbor is not.

**Shame for Christ** (4:16): “*If anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed.*”

When dragged before magistrates, officials do everything in their power to impress the accused with their power and to shame them for breaking some man-made statute. They put the accused in jail, make them wear humiliating bright colored clothes, haul them into court in chains surrounded by armed guards as if they were the Boston strangler.

In this light, it is important to understand the court will never attack a believer for His Christian faith. Rather, they will assail the practical expression of His faith. A man can believe abortion is murder and no municipality will touch him; however, if he starts protesting and preaching near an abortion clinic, authorities may have an epileptic fit.

Peter is concerned that Christians have a clear conscience and that they are not ruled by the twisted conscience of judges and BAR attorneys.

The opposite of shame is honor, and it is a great honor to be hauled into court for breaking man-made codes in the State's commercial schemes.

It is a great honor to be arrested for practicing one's Christian faith, howbeit, opposed to regulations passed by statist. Thus, fiery trials help us to discern the difference between God's commands, and man's changing codes and statutes.

The apostle issues commands to God's people undergoing a "fiery trial" (4:12); these fiery trials test our faith, help us to develop clarity, and to perfect our character. The admonitions help us focus on virtues to develop. The prohibitions help us to identify vices to avoid. It is part of the judgment of God that must begin at the House of God.

## Part IV

### *Judgment MUST Begin at the House of God*

#### **What Needs to Be Cleansed in the Modern Church?**

*"Judgment must begin at the House of God"- 1 Peter 4:17*

Wolves are ruling America. As this work was being written, America's first drag king and drag queen inhabited the White House devouring the wheat of the land and spreading tares among the people.

The Godless State appointed a Sodomite man and his husband to be an ambassador to Viet Nam. Planned Parenthood was caught harvesting baby parts to the highest bidder. The Huffington Post reported that every 28 hours some unarmed black man is murdered by cops. Legal and illegal immigrants deplete the nation's resources. In some cities, half the students in public school can't speak English.

The country has been turned into a hell hole and there hasn't even been a whimper from American churches.

Lipstick pastors continue to entertain petticoat Christians pursuing health and wealth in a country trillions of dollars into debt.

*"Icabod"* is written all over the front doors of modern sanctuaries.

If things are to improve, judgment must begin with the House of God.

Let's take a look at a few things that need to be purged from the American Church while keeping in mind that God has his own list of defects:

#### **Lukewarmness Towards Christ (Revelation 3:18-20):**

The Laodicean Church discovered that Christ was on the outside knocking to get in. Likewise, the disgusting apathy of Laodicea is upon the American church. Jesus is knocking to get in.

Milquetoast Christianity nauseates the "Amen, the faithful and True Witness." Zealot penitents are few.

Thomas got it correct. Since Jesus rose from the dead, He is Lord and God (John 20:28). Matthew saw Him as the King of Israel; Mark presents Christ as the Servant of the LORD; Luke honors him among the Greeks as the perfect man,

but more than man, God in man, the “*Son of Man.*” John presents him as the Logos of all Mankind, the Son of God, “*the way, the truth, and the life*” (John 14:6).

After his resurrection, Jesus asked Peter, “*Do you love me?*” Peter discovered that being fond of Jesus, was not acceptable.

Jesus sought real and true devotion. Judgment must begin at the House of God because Christians are sentimental about Jesus, but woefully lacking in vigorous devotion to the risen Savior.

**Charismatic Confusion:** Wild-eyed, orgasmic preachers are leading their flocks into baby-babel, slaying of the spirit, and unholy laughter.

These so called “Christians” don’t know the difference between real revival and pseudo-revival. They preach “self-edification” when they should be preaching self-denial; that God wants every Christian to be rich in spite of the fact Jesus said, “*Blessed are the poor;*” that the fruit of the spirit is tongues rather than “*Love, joy, peace, . . . and self-control.*”

These frauds must be exposed and purged from Christianity.

**Feminization of Christianity:** Half the students in some seminaries are women . . . and they are looking for a job. While they appear to do good, female pastors feminized Christianity . . . and this has nullified masculine Christianity. It is devilish.

When Christian men lose their testosterone, the church loses its defenses. No war in the world has or will be won by women leading it.

No civilization has ever been built or maintained by women. When women lead, permissiveness rules. Enemies cross borders with no resistance. Sweden, German, Britain, and American come to mind.

The apostle Paul forbids women to lead men, teach men, control men, or pray instead of men (1 Timothy 2:8ff).

What God condemns in the lesser, He condemns in the greater; that is, God does not sanction the leadership of women over men in the home, in the church, or the nation!!

*Genesis 3:16 . . . and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*

Every skirt in the pulpit needs to be fired and expelled from the church of Jesus Christ for rebellion against God’s law order.

*Judgment must begin at the House of God.*

**Adultery**: The Bride of Christ has forsaken her Lord and jumped in bed with the United States Government. It divorced Christ as Head of the church and now wears a 501 c 3 wedding band.

When government is god in the minds of Christians, you can not expect them NOT to betray you! Selah.

As a government corporation, it sleeps under the blanket with Mormons and the Church of Satan. Like the Pharisees who declared, "We have no king but Caesar," church pastors cling to their precious "tax-exempt" status and are quite happy being a pimp and prostitute to the IRS.

This is no minor flaw, spiritual and legal fornication is treason to Christ Who is "Head of all rule and authority."

Judgment must begin at the House of God for "not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God" (Colossians 2: 10, 19).

**Saltless Christianity**: Christ called the early disciples the "*salt of the earth*." Within forty years of the Christ event, citadels of false religion and fortresses of secular power began to crack.

Hundreds of churches sprang up around the Mediterranean. Salt was in the air. Christians preached Another King besides Caesar and the message "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17).

Today, however, pastors are more like maple syrup than salt (See heretic Smilin' Joel Osteen as an example).

American Christianity believes that being sugar-slap nice is the way to win the world to Christ.

*Nicety is a spiritual disease.*

Some churches are so sweet that you get diabetes just walkin' through the front door.

Some pastors are so sweet you get cavities just listen' to their nice sermons.

Paul condemned this sugar-blasted Christianity when he said, "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn?" (1 Corinthians 5:5-2).

Judgment must begin at the House of God because the modern Christians, instead of being the salt of the earth, they are so ooey-gooney, marshmallow-sweet, they are unable to stand up to the baby butchers and the big, bad Homo-Lesbo hate machine.



**Christian Zionism:** John Hagee, and thousand like him, are calling unsaved Jews the “*people of God*” and claiming that the Ashkenazi tribalists in Israel who are committing genocide against the Palestinians are a “fulfillment of prophecy.”

Hagee even called Jewish anti-Christis his “brothers” (Four Blood Moons Interview). Zionism and their control of world government is the problem, not the solution.

Judaism is anti-Christ, anti-Christian, and anti-humanity (1 Thessalonians 2:15).

The ZOGS (Zionist Organized Government) are responsible for sixty million murders in Russia, for bringing America into WWI, WWII, and for the destruction of Christianity in the West. ZOGS control the Federal Reserve banking system, the Porn Industry, the U.S. Government, and the world media outlets.

When will Christians wake up and realize they are the “*people of God*” (1 Peter 1:1-2), and that their country has been flushed down the toilet by the ZOGS? It is the ZOGS who sponsor feminism, abortion, sodomy, bestiality, usury, terrorism, taxation, the fiat dollar, and slavery. ZOGS are the disease, not the cure (Philippians 3:2ff).

*Judgment must begin at the House of God to separate the sheep from the goats; the true people of God from Jewish pretenders.*

In summary, we are living in perilous times where we are seeing a rapid descent into ancient paganism.

The de-Christianization of America has to be laid at the feet of the nation’s lipstick pastors who are feeding petticoat Christians chocolate e’clair sermons.

The modern church has drifted into the sea of a “feel-good,” Prosperity Theology away from the true gospel that teaches “*Christ suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God being put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit*” (3:18).

This departure from the faith has produced a weak, anemic Christianity in Christendumb.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the focal point of history to Whom ALL men must give account. He is ready to judge the living and the dead. Good Christian men sense judgment is near. Peter would agree, but said, “*Judgment must begin at the House of God.*”

The remedy is to surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (3:15) Who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers \* having been subjected to him.

All must give account to Him “Who is ready to judge the living and the dead” (4:5). Therefore, “arm yourself” (4:1) as a soldier prepared to fight the citadels of wickedness because “judgment must begin at the House of God” (4:17).

*\*[Gill notes: by “angels” may be meant angels both good and bad, who are all in subjection to Christ; and by authorities and powers, the kings, princes, and governors of this world, who hold their dominions from and under the Lord Jesus Christ; and which is an argument why believers should patiently bear all their sufferings and afflictions, since Christ has the government in his hands, and he rules and overrules all things for good; and when he pleases, he can put a stop to the rage and persecutions of men;]*

## 29. Dress Codes and the Permissive Pastor



Figure 23: Freepik

We are living in a sloppy, super-permissive time in history when standing on principle can be dangerous to your future employment.

People are expecting robotic perfection in every human interaction . . . and if they don't receive it, they are willing to “burn the house down” and to destroy a man's career in order to get their way socially. There is no tolerance on the left for conservative rules and standards, and they will demand perfection from opponents to their rules when it is convenient (Think of the Kavanaugh Hearings).

When the standard on the left is Sodom and Gomorrah, how can a conservative Christian avoid conflict?

Using the term “mob” or “black face” or wearing a MAGA hat can get you driven out of restaurant by those demanding political correctness.

**Here is one incident in Canada where rule enforcement created a political storm.**

*My comments are in red*

Background: The Students at St. Theresa's Catholic School have been soliciting the school to change its dress code and to let girls go braless and to wear short dresses (Fox News, October 2018).



Figure 24: Freepik

If history has taught us anything, it is that boys are attracted to the female form. How is it possible for girls to wear short dresses and for teachers and other students not to see up skirt? To girls, dressing in short skirts is sexy, flirty, and “cool,” but to a boy, a mini-skirt is an invitation to stare and wonder.

No, the answer is not to condemn men and how God made them. The answer is for young women to dress modestly out of love in order not to stumble her brother.

“Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother’s way” (Romans 14:13)

Dress codes are necessary so that students can focus on learning and not be distracted by sexual thoughts. Catholic girls need to learn to love their catholic “brothers,”

understand the laws of nature, and dress appropriately so the boy-bees are not attracted to the honey.

Principal Bern Tate and vice principal came under fire for their comments when they entered a 12th-grade classroom and asked all the female students to stand up for a skirt-length check.

This is perfectly appropriate as some students will test the boundaries. Without rules and standards, students will do “what is right in their own eyes,” and students are not mature enough to establish their own dress code.

Apparently, one of the girl students was wearing a short dress that was sure to capture the attention of every pubescent male student in the school.

Do you think?

Every editor of every skin magazine knows what gets the attention of young men.

The principal said, “It’s like the #MeToo movement. You’re putting every male in this building in an awkward situation,” the recording reportedly said.

The principal was correct. Girls in short dresses are a “stumbling block” to male students; that is, they are seeking the attention of boys for all the wrong reasons.

Furthermore, referring to the “MeToo Movement” where women are viewed as innocent as a spring flower and males are always the ones guilty of sexual misconduct is modern lie fostered by feminist women in the “MeToo Movement.”

Girls learn quickly from the pop culture how to dress in ways to lure the attention of males . . . and, sexual provocation by scantily-clad women is a form of sexual harassment!!

One of the other students stated, ““We were like, uh, that’s uncomfortable. We’re underage females in a Catholic school – why is that comment being made by someone of authority?”

Too bad, so sad! No one has a right to go through life and never be offended.

It is not possible for a principal or teacher to enforce rules and not to offend proud, over-sensitive students and parents who treat their feelings like a little kitten to be cuddled. Grow up!

A parent responded, “Talk about the skirts, tell them what to wear, but do not mention #me-too in that same context. They’re really implying that these girls are asking for it by showing their legs.”

Let’s call this parent Ms. Soon-touchy. In this case, the parent should have stood with the school. But, she chose a course of confrontation and division.

The principal offered an apology.

Why apologize for doing your job and educating the student? Can you say “weak?”

Stepping on a student’s feelings is not a crime!

The principal is not there to coddle, pad, soften, cushion, and tenderize “code” enforcement in order to avoid hurting students emotionally. It simply is not possible to enforce rules and not to offend code breakers and their parents who expect robotic perfection in every crisis.

The principal erred in apologizing. He should have stood on his principles.

The Board issued this statement,

*“It was never the principal’s intention to make anyone feel uncomfortable, and he is working to resolve any issues that students and parents have. As a board, we are all committed to learning and growing from this situation. Moving forward, we will be asking our principals to initiate discussions and review their current dress code practices, which will include consultation with parents. This situation will certainly be a starting point for conversations in each of our respective school communities.”*

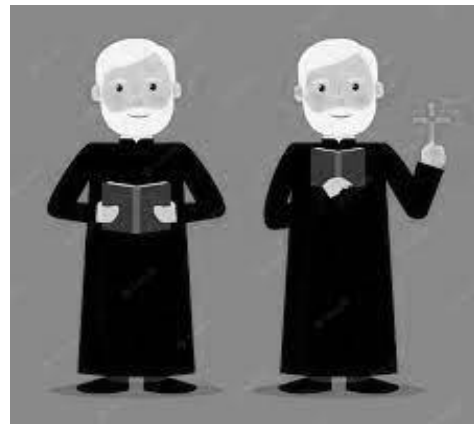


Figure 25: Freepik

What a wimpy board! Is the board is letting the monkeys are running the zoo? Must daily code enforcement be subject to “initiating discussions” and dress code modification? Isn’t the dress code in writing, and didn’t the students and parents agree to support school rules. Isn’t the board capable of reading God’s Word and establishing a dress code that pleases God and that conforms to standards of modesty necessary for our times?

Do you understand the times? We are living in a time of lawlessness were institutions are being attacked for their rules by the most liberal, permissive segment of society. Never ask a barber if you need a haircut, and never as a prostitute if your dress is too short.

The LORD God said, ““You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes” (Deuteronomy 12:8).

A lesson all leaders: Rules are needed for schools and for churches. You will never be in trouble for teaching Biblical standards for modesty . . . until you apply those standards by setting rules that reflect God’s moral standards for students. And, you cannot please everyone . . . unless you let every girl and parent do what is right in their own eyes.

If the apostle Paul urged the discipline of “shearing” women who refused to veil themselves in church where our attention should be focused on the glory of God, what we he say about young women who came to a church school, braless, in a see-through blouse, and in a skirt that exposes their fundamentals? (1 Corinthians 11:3-16).

-----  
Notes:

Consider the dress code in Orthodox Churches.

Ladies – sleeved and non-revealing dress or blouse, respectable fitted clothes and skirt length with head covering

Gentlemen – sleeved and collared shirt, long trousers, coat and tie is preferred with no head covering

Source: <https://armenianchurchsydney.org.au/learning/respectful-traditions-of-the-armenian-church/>

## 30. Women’s Dress in the Early Church

## Unveiled?



Figure 26: Unsplash

“When the gospel was new and pure, Christian women covered themselves with long robes and veils, like many Muslim women today.

This is evidenced by all early Christian writers that commented on the subject.

There was a controversy whether the forerunners of nuns needed to veil themselves during church services, but there was no dispute that Christian women, especially married women, ought to conceal bodily features when in other public places.

The earliest reference is Paul, who wrote,

*“But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered” (1 Corinthians 11:5-6).*

To emphasize the indecency of an uncovered female head, Paul added in verse 13:

*“Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?” In verse 16, he also drew from the universal practice of all Christendom: “we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”*

**Clement of Alexandria** wrote when dean between A.D. 192 and 202 of Christianity’s foremost institution of learning. He stated it is unseemly for clothes to end above the knee,

*“nor is it becoming for any part of a woman to be exposed.”*

*A Christian woman was to be “entirely covered, unless she happen to be at home. For that style of dress is grave, and protects from being gazed at. And she will never fall, who puts before her eyes modesty, and her shawl; nor will she invite another to fall into sin by uncovering her face.”*

Clement also pointed out that

*“it is prohibited to expose the ankle ... it has also been enjoined that the head should be veiled and the face covered; for it is a wicked thing for beauty to be a snare to men.”*

He considered as improper clothing for women anything that did not cover the eyes, or hide the shape of the body.

**The Didascalia** was a comprehensive manual of Christian corporate and private life compiled in the early third century.

After discountenancing otherwise honorable women adopting the clothing, footwear and hairstyles of streetwalkers, it instructed:

*“Thou therefore that art a Christian, do not imitate such women; but if thou wouldst be a faithful woman, please thy husband only. And when thou walkest in the street, cover thy head with thy robe, that by reason of thy veil thy great beauty may be hidden. And adorn not thy natural face; but walk with downcast looks, being veiled.”*

In reference to the Roman practice of public nude bathing, it asked Christian women how they could appear naked in such circumstances even though they covered their faces and bodies in the street.

Between the times of Clement and the Didascalia came the church father **Tertullian**.

His treatise “On Prayer” presented a long dissertation on whether women were free to be unveiled in church when all Christian women wore veils outside it.

There was a controversy over whether “woman” in 1 Corinthians 11:5-16 applied to (1) every post-pubescent female or (2) only an adult female who was sexually experienced, i.e., not a virgin.

He had been a prominent Roman lawyer and became champion of the cause that “woman” included sexually inexperienced adult females.

Tertullian spoke of concealing the face in public as universal among Christian females. He spoke of outdoor veiling as a law of nature and called on proto-nuns to be consistent by veiling at public worship as well. Fortuitously, later nun-interns yearned to wear the black “habit” as a sign of their submission to Christ.

He rhetorically queried:

*“Why do you denude before God what you cover before men? Will you be more modest in public than in the church?”*

Part of his reasoning was that, as brides of Christ, nuns ought to be covered because

*“He bids the brides of others to be veiled, His own, of course, much more.”*

Years later, Tertullian noted that women veiled their heads in public, in the presence of heathen men, with the implication that all adult Christian females wore “burqas” or at least ample veils outside home and church.

No author in the first two centuries of the Christian church whose writings have survived disputed that married women must be veiled in church or that all believing adult females must cover their features when outside it or their home.”

Courtesy of David W. T. Brattston, a retired lawyer residing in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, Canada.

-----  
Notes:

Consider the dress code in Orthodox Churches.

Ladies – sleeved and non-revealing dress or blouse, respectable fitted clothes and skirt length with head covering.

Gentlemen – sleeved and collared shirt, long trousers, coat and tie is preferred with no head covering

Source: <https://armenianchurchsydney.org.au/learning/respectful-traditions-of-the-armenian-church/>

## 31. Beware of the Sweet Church

### . . . and Lollypop Christians

*Matthew 5:13 “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.*



Figure 27: Source Unknown

*The strength of the church is its sweetness; and, the weakness of the church is its sweetness.*

When pastors talk of discipleship, many refer to replicating lollypop-Christians who are able to charm the stripes off candy cane.



But, our Lord called His disciples “*salt*” and not “sugar cubes.” He mentions the metaphor “salt” three times in Matthew 5:13 as the property he most desired among his people. Salt cleanses. Salt stings. Salt preserves.

He also called his disciples “*the light of the world.*” Light exposes. Light cleanses. Light kills. As light, the disciples were to expose the deeds of darkness.

Today’s church is way out of balance and more concerned about not offending people than being salt and light. This spirit of sweetness is seen by the rejection of rules and standards and hard-to-swallow Biblical truth.

Permissiveness is the plague among the Christian powder-puff population.

In order to attract people, many churches are offering coffee and donuts at the worship service so people feel warm and fuzzy in church. “Come as you are,” they say. “We accept everybody. Come to church in your jogging shorts and t-shirts. It’s O.K. We don’t believe in legalism or judging others.”

The pH level of the church is deficient (pH = people into holiness).

Even the sermons of most pastors have more sugar than a Krispy Kreme Donut: “Five Ways to be Truly Happy;” “How to Win Friends and Influence People;” “Six Steps toward Wealth;” “How Never to Be Sick Again;” “How to be Joyful No Matter What;” “God Wants You to Be Happy;” “God Loves Homosexuals.”

As we read the titles of these sermons, we have to ask if these sugar-glazed pastors are living in the same world as the rest of us.

In the world most of us live, people struggle to pay bills, to keep a job, to restrain their impulse to clobber someone; to believe good is coming out of trials, why to keep their marriage together, and how to knock sense into a few congressmen?

I was reading a church website for a friend who asked for help in locating a good church in the Denver area. The website was carefully constructed. There wasn’t a single word a Mormon or Catholic or Charismatic or Jehovah Witness or Conservative Baptist or a Muslim could object to; that is, it communicated nothing about its distinctives.

It was the “*sugar-sweet , ya-all come, inoffensive*” type church. There was not a lick of salt in its promotional materials. It stood for nothing; and, in our Lord’s terms, it was “*no longer good for anything except to be thrown out.*”

Beware of the Sweet Church and Lollypop Christians.

If you have not irritated some whacko today for Jesus’ sake, you are not being the “salt of the earth.”

## 32. Managing Criticism



Figure 28: Unsplash

If you are struggling with how to handle criticism, you are not alone.

Criticism can help or hurt.

Here are a few things I've learned about criticism through the years.

1. If you are not criticized, you are taking few risks and accepting little to no responsibility for decisions you make.
2. Control your emotions . . . easier said than done. With all the power you can muster, put shackles on anger.
3. Sheep head-butting is a part of flock life.
4. Watch your body language and tones. Keep calm. Be relaxed, but serious. Avoid smiles. When you speak, speak slowly, deliberately, softly, and **briefly**.  
*Proverbs 15:1 "A soft answer turns away wrath . . . but grievous words stir up anger."*
5. Ask: Is the critic there to help or hurt, to advance your ministry, or to relieve his own frustrations? Listen carefully to friends of your ministry, and carefully watch critics.  
*Proverbs 15:31 "Whoever heeds life-giving correction will be at home among the wise" (NIV)*
6. Keep your friends close and your enemies closer. "You can't fly like an eagle if you hang out with turkeys!"
7. People will criticize you or your sermon because (a) they love you and want to improve your ministry; or, (b) they want to show off their own knowledge or opinion; or (c) that want to hurt you . . . and maybe take over your ministry.
8. Speaking test the "spirit" of a man (anger, joy, enthusiasm, bitter, etc.), and writing test the accuracy of a man. Guard your spirit and grow in writing skills.
9. Tell the helpful critic, "Thank you for your insight. I believe this will help me in the ministry. Do you have any other helpful suggestions to improve

my ministry?" Shut up, and listen. Keep asking till they run out of suggestions.

10. Tell the adversarial critic: "Thank you, I will carefully consider what you say and make adjustments accordingly." Ask, "do we need to continue this conversation at a later time?" A follow up may be necessary.

Separate the person from the issue. Deal with the issue ASAP, but take you time in confronting a person's character. This takes time, skill, good motives, and facts.

11. Carefully consider what they say.

*James 1:19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;*

- Are they criticizing something you did, something you said, or something they think you are? There is no one response that fits all. Be flexible.
- Ask yourself, "Is this a pot-shot at me, or does this person have a genuine interest in my welfare?"
- Ask questions. You are NOT an answering machine. Ask questions to clarify terms, motives, and facts. The biggest mistake people make is they start motor-mouthing before they have carefully listened to the criticism. Don't say, "I understand!" Say, "tell me more!" Listen, listen, and listen.
- Do they disagree with the facts, procedures, or words said? If so, listen carefully and thank them for pointing out an err or weakness. Tell them, "I will carefully consider what you said" or "duly noted."
- Is the critic using the event to attack your character? Unless your character is deeply flawed, don't take ad hominem reasoning too seriously, but take the critic seriously. You always have the option of walking away from what appears to be a fight.
- What do they want? Criticism is often a power play to gain control over you. Find a way to end this control drama by ending the session quickly. Don't apologize to those who are trying to quarterback you. You can say, "Your concerns are duly noted;" or "You do not have my permission to criticize me at this time;" or "Until I know you have my best interest in mind, go home, pray to God for me, and keep your opinions to yourself."
- Is the critic hiding something? Quite often the critic will castigate you in order to cover up a deeper sin in his own life. Sometimes, you need to go on the offensive and start asking the critic personal questions about his moral life, marriage, and or business — not to embarrass them, but to be God's humble-assertive mouthpiece to them. Is there a deeper need here that I can't perceive, yet?

- Is the critic ordering you to do something? By what authority? Giving orders is a form of assault! Make demands in court is acceptable because you have a contract with the court, but private demands and order are a form of verbal abuse. Free men do not take orders from anybody.
- Is the person unreasonable? You can't reason with an unreasonable person.
- Ask, "Why is this subject so important to you?"
- Saying, "I am grieved that you are so distraught over this. How can I help relieve the stress you feel."
- Set boundaries, "Tell me more . . . or don't talk to me like that." or, "Your tone is very angry. Do you need to take some time to calm down?" "Let's talk next week."

12. Don't write a letter to express frustration. Get on the phone and talk it out. Respond in writing only if the critic writes to you. Be careful, what every you write will and can be used against you. Be short, factual, and witty-wise.

13. Overcome fear of confrontation. Pick your battles.

14. Stick up for your rights, and confront those who are using or abusing you.

Don't allow people to use you as a dart board. Set boundaries for bullies; unmask snipers firing at you behind your back; draw out the meek, fearful weak critic who has something to say but can't quite spit it out.

Say to bullies and Sherman tank personalities, "Excuse me, I am a human being and I don't respond well when people are in my facing shouting orders at me. When you calm down, try coming and talking to me in a civil tone." Walk away.

Tell gossips, "If you have something to say, say it to my face and not behind my back. Any more of this divisive behavior and I will have to address this to the boss."

15. Give yourself some slack. It takes a lot of energy and wisdom to engage a critic. If you are growing to be like the Master, don't permit others to bully you or rail on you. Practice the art of grace and the graceful answer. Grace cushions lots of blows. Courage drives the vultures away.



16. God requires excellence; He does not require perfection; immature bosses require perfection, and no nothing about excellence.

17. Even if you do everything right, it does not mean the interaction will succeed. Some people always act like porkey pines.

## 33. Under Accusation

All of God's men will experience accusations in their ministry.

One of the difficulties ministers have to endure is false accusations by the fellowship of the discontented within a church.

It is essential innocent ministers learn how to defend themselves once they come under a cloud of accusation.

Paul – “Brothers and fathers, listen to my defense that I now make to you.” (Acts 22)

Consider this defense against John Rushdoony, falsely accused, as penned by his youngest daughter:

“In September of 1958 my father was invited to speak at The Central California League of Men's Societies meeting at the Christian Reformed Church in Ripon. In October, just three weeks before the event, he received a two-sentence letter cancelling his invitation: “Due to the circumstances you are in at present...” Dad had spent a year and a half defending himself against anonymous rumors and whispered accusations. He was unwilling to let such a vague statement go unchallenged. His response followed:

‘Your letter has been received. You state, “Due to the circumstances you are in at present the Board of the Central California League of Men's Societies feel that we cannot go through with this engagement.”

To what circumstances do you refer? And what are the grounds on which this judgment was based? If my “circumstances” are the problem to you, my “circumstances” are sinful in your eyes, and I have then been judged without evidence and on hearsay.

Apparently, the Board reached a decision concerning my life and character without even hearing any real evidence on the matter, which, according to Scripture, must be at the mouth of two or more witnesses (Matt. 18:16). Again, Scripture says, “Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor: I am Jehovah.” (Lev.

19:16). Many, many more Scriptures could be cited, including the 8th Commandment.

What your decision implies is that I am under a moral cloud and therefore the Societies “feel we cannot go through with this engagement.” But to reach such a conclusion without evidence is not Christian conduct, and it places me under a moral cloud without evidence or hearing.

I have, in the past year and half, been savagely and viciously slandered by modernists and heretics in the Presbyterian Church USA, but, when I challenged that church to produce any evidence of unchristian conduct on my part, they had to take official action clearing me. My position has been thoroughly examined by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, through the proper channels, and I have been accepted as a minister in good standing.

My associations with the Christian Reformed Church have been many and very happy ones, and I have come to know many of your men personally. It is my earnest expectation that this happy association will continue, and that this is merely one of those hasty and ill-considered errors to which all of us are too prone. I hope to be in Ripon on November 7.

Consider what a failure to sustain the invitation means:

First, it places me under a moral cloud in the eyes of many, and without any evidence.

Second, it placed [sic, should be places] you under a moral cloud also, in that it will gradually be known that you acted without evidence. Also, some of your men will wonder if my real offense is not the fact that I am now in the OPC, and a strong follower of Van Til, and have accordingly been made to suffer for a church situation of a few years ago in which I had no part.

Third, it will trouble or offend members of the OPC that such an action has been taken. Our two churches are the two strong Reformed churches in the United States of this day, and nothing should be done to harm their fellowship, and it is unfortunate that at times a few act as though we were not one in a common cause for our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Very sincerely,

R. J. Rushdoony”

-----

Churches are intensely political. One of the problems of young ministers is that they are ignorant about principals of law. Many lose their standing in ministry because they don't know how to advance a correct defense.

### **Notice six quick lessons from Rushdoony:**

1. **Ask questions rather than offering a wordy defense.** One key to learn is to ask questions. It's an error to all mouth and no ears when accused. Under a cloud of accusations, the subject of accusation must learn to be a question machine, not an answering machine.
2. **Determine if there is "probable cause."** To be morally indictable, the accused must violate a clear moral law (1 Corinthians 5 or 1 Timothy 3). Without probable cause, no board should entertain an accusation nor should a privilege of ministry be withdrawn—one is always innocent until proven guilty. Ministers must be "above reproach." But "gossip" and "rumor" about peccadillos are not worthy of a formal hearing accept to dismiss them.
3. **He challenged the lack of evidence.** Rushdoony's accusers had a claim without proof of claim. Without evidence, the charged demanded dismissal. Claims must be clear and substantially supported by evidence beyond reasonable doubt . . . or be dismissed.
4. **He stated the substantial harm being committed by entertaining claims without proof of claim.** Accusation without evidence places a minister under a cloud of accusation that can cripple a good man's ministry. And, behind every false allegation you can whiff the sulfurous efflux of the "Accuser of the brethren." [Note, Rushdoony did give his accusers
5. **He entered a counter claim.** Circulating false accusations destroy the church. Rushdoony exposed how others would be injured by false accusations. Ultimately, Rushdoony was trying to protect God's flock.

The application for a minister under accusations is (1) to listen to the accusation (2) try to determine the probable cause or Biblical violation claimed (3) examine evidence offered (4) demand dismissal if the claim is false and void of substantial evidence, — a claim without proof of claim must be dismissed with prejudice (5) protect the flock from infectious slander and false accusation about the shepherd.

6. **God uses conflict to bring his ministers to Christian maturity.**

### **Other Lessons**

□ Invite Constructive Criticism of your ministry. Inviting others to give suggestions on how to be a better minister, relieve tensions, and enables men to the get their true feelings on the table for the improvement of the ministry.

- Welcome the rebuke of trusted co-workers. It may hurt, and you may not agree, but you'll be better for it.
- Listen, but don't take the angry critique of an uncommitted church member too seriously. When people hold ministers up to the standard of perfection, all fail.

Ministers are average, flawed people seeking to do God's work to the best of their ability. God does not demand perfection, and you should not permit people to use ideal, unreal, utopian credos as the standard to judge your ministry. Get real, not ideal. Excellence, yes; perfection, no.

- Don't tolerate backbiting and muckraking against your ministry. If you deserve it, repent deeply. If you are not sure, walk the high road. If you don't deserve it and Satan is using this to divide and conquer, get out your sword and drive the contender out of the church. Learn the lesson of David (2 Samuel 20). Traitors must be eliminated or your ministry will not survive.

## 34. Jesus, the Great Divider

### *Why can't we all just get along?*

An acquaintance asks me, "why can't we all just get along?"

Actually, these words were first made famous by Rodney King in 1992.

When four police officers were acquitted of nearly beating the man to death, a riot broke out in Los Angeles. For six days people ran through the streets looting, breaking windows, overturning cars, and burning buildings. It cost the City of Los Angeles over a billion dollars.

Why can't we all just get along?

- We will never get along as long as government officials use our tax dollars to support fornicating parents who have six kids with six different last names.
- We will never get along as long as politicians permit armies of young men to trespass across our borders to ransack our country, push Sodomy and LGBT queer values in public school curriculum, and continue to protect murderers who kill babies. Never!



- We will never get along as long as people deny the inspiration of Scripture, the deity of Christ, salvation by faith, and the relevance of the Ten Commandments. Never!
- We will never get along as long as women act like men and men dress like women! Never!
- We will never get along as long as the government seeks to take away our right to privacy, to track us, film us, finger print us, scan us, stalk us, and store our DNA in some IRS national data bank. Never!
- We will never get along as government sanctioned banks create money out of nothing, create money of account and charge us interest on nothing, and then seize our houses and cars for non-payments on an alleged 30-year loan.
- We will never get along as long as cops seize assets of alleged “drug dealers” without a warrant and without a trial by jury!
- We will never get along as long a liberal Antifa professors keep referring to white privilege, calling for the death of white males, and then labeling anyone who disagrees with them a “racist!”
- We will never get along as long as Democrats support bribes and take money for selling State secrets to Russia, China, and Iran (Hillary and Obama).
- We will never get along as long as whackos think having a transvestites in the White House as president and first lady is progress.
- We will never get along as long as some college professors think there are three genders: males, females, and he-shes.
- We will never get along as long as Christmas is about commerce and not about Christ
- We will never get along as long as Hollywood continues to produce pornography in order to turn our daughters into whores and our sons into sex addicts.
- We will never get along because there are still some people in the United States that are true followers of Jesus Christ!

True Christian men are not going to stand for liberal, permissive, loud-mouthed feminist politicians sponsoring bills to turn America into Sodom and Gomorrah.

The Godly will resist, fuss, joust, debate, fight, joust, quarrel, brawl, clash, dispute, duel, feud, quarrel, and riot when liberals stuff their godless, atheistic, humanistic, racist, relative, multicultural values down the throats of our children.

Jesus, the Great Divider

There are still true followers of Christ . . . and the Lord Jesus Christ is the Great Divider!

Jesus is the Source of all this division.

You error if you “suppose” Christ came to bring peace on the earth.

*Luke 12:51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:*

*John 7:43 So there was a division among the people because of him.*

*John 9:16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.*

Jesus divides the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:33).

Jesus divides the tares from the wheat (Matthew 13:30).

The Lord Jesus waged war on Egypt until Pharaoh bent to do the will of God.

*Exodus 8:23 And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be.*

He divided the sons of Korah from the congregation. Because they would not submit to the authority of Moses, God buried them alive (Numbers 16).

*“Separate yourselves from among this (wicked) congregation, that I may consume them (the sons of Korah) in a moment.” (Numbers 16:21)*

He divides the clean from the unclean, edible foods from the inedible, clean clothes from the soiled, healthy people from the sick ones, sanitary houses from the unsanitary (Leviticus 12-15).

He divided Ephraim from Judah because Solomon’s heart was divided from him (1 Kings 11-12)

And, Jesus wages war on Sodomites, feminists, abortionists, globalist, and communist today. War and division will not cease until men bow to His rule and His authority (Philippians 2:10-11).

He forbids Christians to touch defiled things and requires His followers to separate (divide) from the unclean (2 Corinthians 6:19).

Christians are commanded to drive heretics out of the flock . . . and, this will cause sheep to Baa (Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10).

- Since light cannot have fellowship with darkness, Christians can have no peace with God’s enemies (1 Corinthians 16:14).

- Since Christ has declared war on his enemies, so must we! (1 Corinthians 15:25)
- Since God acted to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, so must we!
- Since God declared war on Egypt to make men free, so must we!
- Since our Lord came to bring a sword and not peace, so must we!

Addendum: While Jesus is the greater Divider, He is also the Great Uniter. Only Christ and His law has the power to unite men from every nation. Like Nehemiah's wall divided outsiders from Jerusalem, it also united the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Religion and its law, is one of the cultural foundations for nations. Law unites a nation and diversity of law divides a nation. For an understanding of how law unites people see SEDM, "Laws of the Bible," Section 5.5).

In contrast, however, the world will never come together around LGBTQ values, women's right to choose, or the rule of communism.

As an example of how our Lord has united people, take a look at (1) Alfred the Great: a Model Man; (2) the Puritan Reformation, and (2) how the Country of Armenia united around the Nicene Creed– a creed which tolerates no dissent.

## 35. Slow Down



Figure 29: Freepik

*"But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep [silence](#) before him." - Habakkuk 2:20*

Don't be in such a hurry. You may be breaking God's speed limit. Rest. Be quiet. Think. Pray.

Make a careful

Figure 30: Source Unknown decision.

Life is not just a list of do's. It is about knowing Christ, becoming like Him, and laying hold of His promises. [QQ Pictures](#)

***"For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength." - Isaiah 30:15***

The great Catholic Orders require silence, quiet, peace, pacing, and contemplation. Running, emotional outbursts, and persistent talking is strictly forbidding.

It is said of Russian President Vladimir Putin that his greatest asset is that he listens well . . . then retires to think about what his advisors recommend, and then makes the decision that is best for his nation – an rare and precious trait. Let us do the same.

*Decision relieves a crisis.*

## 36. Overcoming Racism

*“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” - Galatians 3:28*

**The issue is not skin, but sin.**

## 37. How People Learn the Christian Faith

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God *is* one Lord” – Deuteronomy 6:4

FACT: 80% of the world population learns by HEARING and they are called “AUDITORY LEARNERS.

What they read means very little to them. That is how their brains are wired. That is well known by educators. Only 20% are Visual Learners. Most managers, preachers, and professors are Visual Learners.

Neither type is superior to the other. One has no control over genetic expressions...but public schools always favor the visual learner, and shame the auditory learner.

*By “hearing” we don’t mean longer and louder sermons! God forbid!*

Knowing this, what are pastors supposed to do?

***Consider establishing the following in your church.***

1. Put up Christian icons, flags, banners, paintings, stain glass windows to teach your congregation Bible stories and truth.
2. Employ responsive reads, at the start, middle, and end of the service.
3. Enact good, basic, fundamental liturgies for church service.

4. Develop God-honoring traditions that instill security and hope.
5. Celebrate communion each week so people are cross-centered, not pastor-centered.
6. Practice Biblical mandates like baptism, breaking of bread, hat removal for men, headcoverings for women (1 Cor. 11:1ff), modest dress for men and women, singing, liturgy, the Lord's Prayer, worship offerings, etc.

Note: Tradition is not bad. Do something twice and it is a tradition. The key is to employ Godly, Christ-honoring, educational traditions that cement basic Christian doctrine into the minds of men and women.

7. Establish dogmatic services where every year at the same time you dedicate a service to an essential doctrine of the Christian faith like Christmas, the circumcision of Christ Sunday to honor his humanity, Justification Sunday, Easter to celebrate our Lord's resurrection, Sanctification Sunday, Right to Life Sunday, Marriage Sunday, God's Law Sunday, Pentecost, and others. Dogmatic services are necessary where ever the world is attacking church doctrine.
8. Sing the good ol' hymns (rich traditional songs) and avoid a diet of soft, repetitive pop-culture choruses. Use pop-culture songs in a special of the week, but avoid using them as part of the church-staple worship service.
9. Make your services educational, dignified, and orderly.
10. Involve the men because good men learn by doing.
11. In sermons, stress the fundamentals: definitions, context, intent! Avoid trying to be too funny, too creative, too emotional, too popular, to "in," too dramatic or being the hammer of the Spirit. Cute sermon's offer temporary gratification for the moment, but don't build the gospel into the hearts of men. Jesus wasn't cute or woke, yet his message is here to stay. God's Word will change and grow a church if the message is accurate, clear, and concise. Be accurate. Be clear. Be brief as possible.

Note: You have authority to establish dogmatic traditions to keep members of your church in the Christian faith: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (Mt. 18:16).

Note: America is a young country. Its cities are the center of trends and innovation. Change is common. But, adopting new trends can destabilize church congregations. Churches that try to be woke and on the "cutting edge" of cultural issues will descend into the graveyard of failed churches.

Practice these things in faith to the honor of Christ and maybe, just maybe, your church will last another century.

## 38. Dostoevsky on the Importance of the Church

Both State and church are important as the former exists for the administration of justice, and the later has a mission of mercy and grace.



A cruel tension exists between the true Church and the de facto State as both compete for the affections of men.

Both claim authority; both need money; one through voluntary tithes; and the other through compulsory taxation.

Moreover, the State is jealous of the church because the church is God's moral authority on earth . . . and because the State wants all your devotion, respect, and money.

Dostoevsky's faith was forged in the furnace of affliction by communist leaders who criminalized politics — leaders that professed a love for the poor masses, but hated the destitute individual.

Dostoevsky, having seen the roaring brutality of man and intrinsic evils of government, provides this insight on the importance of the church.

*"If it were not for Christ's Church, indeed there would be no restraint on the criminal in his evildoing... If anything protects society even in our time, and even reforms the criminal himself and transforms him into a different person, again it is Christ's law alone, which manifests itself in the acknowledgement of one's own conscience." (Fyodor Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov)*

## 39. A.W. Tozer on the Authority of Christ

"Let me state the cause of my burden. It is this: Jesus Christ has today almost no authority at all among the groups that call themselves by His name. By these I mean not the Roman Catholics nor the liberals, nor the various quasi-Christian cults. I do mean Protestant churches generally, and I include those that protest the loudest that they are in spiritual descent from our Lord and His apostles, namely, the evangelicals.

It is a basic doctrine of the New Testament that after His resurrection the Man Jesus was declared by God to be both Lord and Christ, and that He was invested by the Father with absolute Lordship over the church which is His Body. All authority is His in heaven and in earth. In His own proper time He will exert it to the full, but during this period in history He allows this authority to be challenged or ignored. And just now it is being challenged by the world and ignored by the church.

The present position of Christ in the gospel churches may be likened to that of a king in a limited, constitutional monarchy. The king (sometimes depersonalized by the term "the Crown") is in such a country no more than a traditional rallying point, a pleasant symbol of unity and loyalty much like a flag or a national anthem. He is lauded, feted and supported, but his real authority is small. Nominally he is head over all, but in every crisis someone else makes the decisions. On formal occasions he appears in his royal attire to deliver the tame, colorless speech put into his mouth by the real rulers of the country. The whole thing may be no more than good-natured make-believe, but it is rooted in antiquity, it is a lot of fun and no one wants to give it up.

Among the gospel churches Christ is now in fact little more than a beloved symbol. "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" is the church's national anthem and the cross is her official flag, but in the week-by-week services of the church and the day-by-day conduct of her members someone else, not Christ, makes the decisions. Under proper circumstances Christ is allowed to say "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy."

Source: AW Tozer -

<http://www.awtozerclassics.com/articles/article/4938678/86408.htm>

## 40. A Message for the Aging Church

### Who Needs Who?

*Leviticus 19:32 You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.*

*Proverbs 16:31 Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.*

A friend is part of a small church where most of the members are over 60 years old. It is an aging church.



Figure 31: Freepik

A young couple came a few times looking for a church to join, but did not return. They wanted a church with lots of other young people.

The congregation had a meeting and discussed their need for young people. For an hour they repeated the phrase, "We need young people."

But, a wise elder stood up and said, "I think your perspective is incorrect. You do not need the young people as much as the young people

need you!" Silence.

He was correct. The elderly have life experience and possess a knowledge of God. Young people are simply products of a narcissistic "me" generation.

Because we worship youth, America has lost its way. The hope of America is not in its youth, but in the minds and hearts of its senior citizens . . . particularly mature Christians.

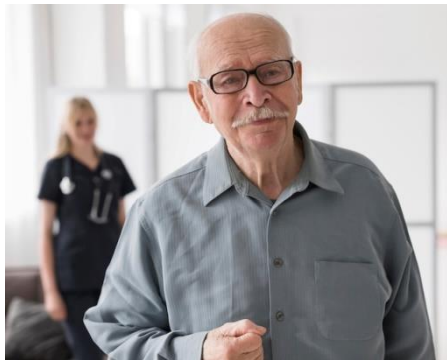


Figure 32: Freepik

Nothing is more important to the youth than to be around senior citizens and learn to live life wisely by tapping into their knowledge and life experience.

### **Who needs who?**

See the silver, greying hair

Signs of maturity and loving care.

Wisdom more precious than gold,

Dwells with the lonely old.

Behind that wrinkled brow, there is much to know,

Frame your questions and begin to grow.

Leave the silliness of your friends,

Look at life through a senior's lens.

*"You do not need the young people as much as the young people need you!"*

## **41. Invocations to Start a Church Service**



Invocations are a means of invoking the presence of God for the blessing of men in communion with the Spirit and to open congregational meetings of the church.

### **Invocations**

Gracious God, make each of us an instrument of your grace. Weave us into a community showing forth your power and tenderness. Bless us and our differences and under gird our courage to stand together in what is true. We call on you today to gather us in your love. Lead us to better know you and glorify you on each step of the journey of our lives. In the name of Jesus, let us now keep silence and breathe in the love of God. Amen.

Sweet, loving Jesus – how often we forget that it is because of You that we live. You made us from the very dust that You created. Then You did the most wondrous of all things, You made us in Your image and You breathed life into us. We thank you today for our lives and we pray that You continue to sustain us each day. From Your heavenly place accept our prayers and our praise. Amen.

Lord, we come before you today and we thank You for all the blessings that You have given us. Many times our lives are so full of busy work that we neglect our relationship with You, for that we are sorry. We know that You never neglect us, for if You did our very lives would cease to be. Continue to pull us to Yourself, guide us in our journey, and hold us close in Your bosom until the day we come home to be with You forever. Be with us now as we gather in Your name, may we feel your presence among us. In Jesus precious name we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires know, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your holy name, through Christ the Lord. Amen.

### **From The Book of Common Prayer, 1979**

Almighty God, who has given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto You and does promise that when two or three are gathered together in Your name You will grant their requests; fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of Your servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of Your truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. Amen.

**By Chrysostom**

Great You are, O lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Your power, and Your wisdom is infinite. You would we praise without ceasing. You call us to delight in Your praise, for You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts find not rest until we rest in You; to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit all glory, praise, and honor be ascribed, both now and forevermore. Amen.

**By St. Augustine**

For the presence of God

O God, be present with us always, dwell within our hearts. With thy light and thy Spirit guide our souls, our thoughts, and all our actions, that we may teach thy Word, that thy healing power may be in us and in thy church universal. Amen.

**By Melancthon, 1550**

Thanksgiving to the eternal Father

We give thanks to thee, omnipotent, everliving God of truth, eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of heaven and earth, of men, and of all creature, Sustainer of all things, Giver of all life, order, and wisdom, unfailing Source of help: And to thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Word and eternal Image: And to thy Holy Spirit, with whom thou didst endow the apostles at Pentecost. We give thanks to thee, O God of holiness, and truth, wisdom and goodness, justice and mercy, purity and loving-kindness, for with goodness and wisdom unmatched thou didst reveal thyself to us, sending thy Son into the world, destined to assume human nature and to become a sacrifice for us.

We give thanks to thee, O God, for gathering thy eternal church, for guarding the ministry of thy Word, for granting thy Holy Spirit, and for giving life everlasting. We thank thee, O God, because thou givest us all good things, because thou dost alleviate and take away the chastisement we justly deserve, because thou bestowest upon us all the blessings of soul and body. To thee be all glory, honor, praise, and thanksgiving, forever and ever. Amen.

**By Melancthon, 1559**

Prayers of the Reformers, compiled by Clyde Manschreck

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly

love You and worthily magnify Your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**James D. Robertson,**

O Lord our God, who is always more ready to bestow Your good gifts upon us than we are to seek them, and Who is more willing to give more than we desire or deserve: help us so to seek You that we may truly find You, so to ask that we may joyfully receive, so to knock that the door of Your mercy may be opened for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Minister's Worship Handbook, Gregorian Sacramentary, Grand Rapids, Baker House, 1974

James D. Robertson,

"Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."  
(Psalm 124:8)

Let us pray.

O Father, majestic is your name!

From the rising of the sun to its setting your name is to be praised,  
Merciful God, gracious Lord.

Hear us in the name of Your Son,

For He has promised that where two or three of us are gathered in  
Your name

He would be with us and our prayer would be heard.

Hear us in the name of Your Son,

For He is the revelation of Your wisdom, the outpouring of your  
glory,

The incarnation of your mercy toward us and the whole human  
race.

To You be the glory,

All praise and honor, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

One God, now and evermore. Amen.

Minister's Worship Handbook, Book of Common Order of St. Giles'  
Cathedral, Grand Rapids, Baker House, 1974

**Hughes Oliphant,**

Almighty God, Who has given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee and does promise that when two or three are gathered together in Thy name you will grant their requests; fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of your servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the world to come life everlasting, Amen.

Leading in Prayer, Grand Rapids: Erdmans Publishing, 1995

**Paul E. Engle,**

How excellent is Thy loving kindness, O God; therefore do the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. Satisfy us now with the goodness of Thy House. In Thy light make us to see light. May Thy Holy Spirit be with us in prayer and praise, in speaking and hearing from Thy Holy Word. And do Thy bless us with all spiritual blessing in Jesus Christ, for His name's sake. Amen.

Baker's Worship Handbook, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998

-----  
Source: <https://thirdmill.org/files/english/html/worship/invok.html>

See: <https://nikeinsights.famguardian.org/forums/topic/invocation-prayers/>

## 42. Beware of Antinomianism

### *A Correction to the Permissiveness of our Age*



*Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem (lutro) us from all iniquity (anomia), and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

The word “iniquity” is the Greek word “anomia” which means “lawlessness” or “without law;” that is, the grace of God (v. 12) has set us free from a life of anarchy and lawlessness where every man does what is right in his own eyes.

The opposite of grace is not law, but permissiveness; the opposite of law is not grace, but lawlessness.

The average American Christian family is led by a mother and father who want their children to have fun and to enjoy life; that is, they minimize rules and discipline in order to avoid the accusation they are “legalistic.”

Consequently, they inadvertently “turn the grace of God into into lasciviousness,” and “deny the authority and law of the “only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” in practice (Jude 1:4).

For sixty years American preachers have encouraged “good ole boy” permissiveness, antinomianism, and the theory that there are many ways to interpret the Bible leaving Evangelicals with no moral authority to confront the spread of immorality in our time.

The gospel sets us free from Judaism and the decrees of men (Colossians 2:20-23), but it does not free us from the requirement to do good as defined by God’s law. Law is a product of God’s sovereignty and love (Exodus 20:1-2), and love is a fulfillment of His law (Romans 13:8; Galatians 5:14; Titus 2:14; James 2:8; 1 John 5:1-3).

## 43. The Beast, the Church, and Vaccines

The Ancient Beast with Sounds that Promoted the Worship of the State

*Daniel 3:3-5 “Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.”*

*And, the people fell down to worship the image.*

The Modern Beast with Sounds that Promote the Worship of the State

*March 3-5-2021: Then the prime ministers, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the health counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the miracle vaccine the CDC had set up; and they stood to take the jab that Moderna manufactured. Then the World Health Organization cried aloud, "To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at the time ye hear the sounds of mass media, fake news, hype, vaccine publicity, propaganda, disinformation, and all kinds of pop-music promotions, ye shall fall down, believe, and inoculate yourself with the lethal DNA altering vaccine the government has set up."*

*Revelation 13:4 "And the Beast was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation . . . And the people worshipped the Beast . . ." and, the deputy agency was given power to kill all those who did not wear the mask and take the vax of the beast.*

## 44. Government is NOT God

*"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."- Exodus 20:2-3*

The Bible is a Book of Politics.

A good pastor will teach his people how to claim their God-given rights, resist the godless State, and support them when they are beat up by this police state.

Generally speaking, Christians will not say government is God, but in practice people pay tithes to Caesar first, talk more about Caesar than the Lord, and listen to media reports on a daily basis to learn about what government is doing rather than read the Scripture.

**That the STATE sees itself as modern god is absolutely true for the following reasons:**

1. The State is a god because it seeks the total subjugation of the total man to total government.
2. The State is a god because it sees itself as the source of law. Since the source of law is Congress and State legislatures, then government is the new god.

If the source of law is in "We the People" and not in the LORD, then the American system is idolatrous.

Since the State seeks the prerogatives belonging to God, it has become a god.

The State is a god because it demands a tithe of the people. Because it demands its tithe first before the people tithe to the church, the State thinks is a higher priority than the Christian religion; and, because it takes 30% of a man's income, it thinks it is more important than the living God.

3. The State is a god when it thinks it can solve global warming.
4. The State is a god when it seeks to save mankind from asteroids.
5. The State is a god when it attempts to control the world and to be the source of predestination.
6. The State is a God when it seeks to become the great and merciful, all-providing, all-caring Sovereign.
7. The State sees itself as a god when it punishes treason to itself, but doesn't punish treason to the Christian God.
8. The State becomes a god when it seeks to arrogate to itself all power and bows to no other. Such a government is totalitarian. Rehoboam, King George, Lincoln, and the Democrat / Republican Party come to mind.
9. The State performs as a god when it seeks to be the solution to all of man's problems: education, health, economics, et al.
10. The State sees itself as a God because it acknowledges no higher authority than itself and its institutions.

The God of the Bible is the LORD God. He is the source of law. To allow another source of law to rule men is idolatry and rebellion. To give a tithe to support another system of law is idolatry . . . and Jeroboam and the ten tribes refused to do so.

## 45. When Liberals are in Charge of a Church



According to Breitbart News 7-28-2020, the Swedish Liberal Church is set to lose over a million members because they have rejected Scripture, ordained women, rejected absolutes, adopted inclusive, permissive feminist policies, and set up a “church” built by women.

Where is the testosterone in the Swedish church?

**“They shall not come near to me,** to serve me as priest, nor come near any of my holy things and the things that are most holy, but they shall bear their shame and the abominations that they have committed” (Ezekiel 44:13).

“My people—infants are their oppressors, and **women rule over them.** O my people, **your guides mislead you** and they have swallowed up the course of your paths” (Isaiah 3:12).

**“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak;** but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law” (1 Corinthians 14:34).

*“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come,*



*except there come a falling away first (apostasy), and that man of sin (the sinful man or woman) be revealed, the son of perdition. Who (he or she) opposeth and exalteth himself (or herself) above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” (2 Thessalonians 2:3)*

*“I will therefore that **men** (andros: holy males) pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting . . . . Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But **I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.**” (1 Timothy 2:8, 11-12).*

*“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction” (2 Peter 2:1).*

*“For there are certain men (now women) crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men (and women), turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Jude 4)*

The Swedish church would do well to repent deeply, for all women pastors to resign, and to wait for God to raise up godly men to lead His flock.

## 46. Where Have All the Men Gone?

*“Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.” (Jeremiah 5:1).*



Figure 33: Freepik

During the reign of Josiah (641-609 BC), Jeremiah could not find one good man in Jerusalem . . . much less a prophet of the Lord (Jeremiah 5:1ff).

In relation to the modern church, where have all the men gone . . . where have all the manly prophets gone? Where are the men with sword in hand defending the weak and quietly doing His will without fanfare and hoopla?

Prophets (true men) in the church have disappeared, and here is the reason why:

Neither the world nor the Church can tolerate a manly prophet until they have killed him.

- Ahab imprisons Micaiah,
- Joash kills Zechariah,
- Herod slays John in prison,
- Eudoxia banishes,
- Sigismund burns Huss.

Priests hated our Lord with a perfect hatred; the priests of Jerusalem ridicule Isaiah; the priest Pashur put Jeremiah into the stocks; the priest Amaziah expels Amos; the priests Annas and Caiaphas slew the Lord of glory; the priest Ananias bid them smite Paul over the mouth" (Dean Farrar, Jeremiah 5).

Why then do men of faith suffer such hardship?

Barnes comments on Psalm 44:22 "For thy sake we are killed all day long . . ." that the true cause of the calamities of God's people is not because of their sins, but because they love God:

*"It is because we are thy friends, and because we worship thee. It is not on account of our national sins; it is not because there is any prevalent idolatry, but it is because we are the worshippers of the true God, and we are, therefore, martyrs. All these calamities have come upon us in consequence of our attachment to thee." (Emphasis mine)*

John Rushdoony says more pastors lose their jobs because of being faithful to the Word of God than for any other reason.

In modern times, good pastors are being replaced by sheep-pettors and trendsetters.

The world hates true prophets, but loves personalities who lead them away from the Law of God.

*"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means (lawlessness); and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" (Jeremiah 5:31).*

Men of integrity stand no chance in politics. People will not tolerate a righteous man. Disagree with the media, and they will eliminate you. Object to homosexuals and the elite will crush you. Try to be the salt of the earth and you find yourself out on the street beggin' for yur supper.

Real men have been replaced by politicians and aggressive feminists under the curse of Eve who are more concerned with power than principle.

Biblical prophets studied the Word of God to instruct men on what they needed to hear; but, modern hand shakers study the polls so they can speak what people want to hear.

Clarke comments on Jeremiah 5:31:

*“False prophets and worldly priests have been in all ages the bane of religion, and the ruin of many souls. When profligate people stand up on behalf of profligate priests, corruption must then be at its height.”*

One thing is needful: to become a true man in communion with God.

When President Garfield was a boy, and was asked what he would be, his reply was: *“Well, first of all, I must make myself a man; for, if I do not succeed in that, I shall not succeed in anything.”*

The Bible illustrator says the following: “What is it to be a “hero”? A “hero” is simply the English form of the Greek “hero’s,” which primarily meant a “man,” a real man, a separate and unmistakable man, as distinct from “anthropos,” or mankind in general. By a recognition of this very truth, that a man’s distinctness as a man among men works and measures his exceptional character and capabilities, the Greeks came to call a grand man, or a great or preeminent man, a hero, as another way of saying that he was “distinguished” man.

Real men love Jesus and seek to please Him by being wholly devoted to His will. But, neither the world nor the Church can tolerate a true man until they have killed him.

## 47. What Does the Bible Say About Female Warriors



Figure 34: Freepik

If you have been artfully conditioned by Hollywood with mythological figures like Wonder Woman, She-Hulk, and Zena the Warrior Princess while growing up, you may be surprised to learn that God disapproves of women generals, female judges, and “bad ass” wrestlers like Barbie Blank-Souray.

Who isn’t mesmerized by Peggy Carter and her super hero feminine mystique? But, she played a fictional character that isn’t remotely related to reality.

***Both nature and Scripture provide ample evidence that women in combat, law-enforcement, and judicial roles are an abomination to the LORD God.***

Before you call me a right wing, conservative nut case, know that I am king in my own home, and that I affectionately call my queen "Ishshah Yaphah" which means "beautiful woman" in Hebrew.

### **A Lesson from Nature**

Live science explains the dimorphism between men and women this way: "

*Peacocks far outclass peahens, for instance, while female anglerfish both outsize and outwit their tiny, rudimentary, parasitic male counterparts."*

- Pound for pound, men are 2/3rds stronger than women. Their muscles and cartilage are stronger and more durable than females.
- Men have flat chests built for work and combat. Women are the only primates that are busty all the time.
- Men are goal orientated and very focused. Women have the ability to adapt to changing circumstances much better than men.
- Men conquer through power and sheer determination; women conquer through peace and compromise.
- Men have lower pitched voices that command and soothe; women have high pitched voices which is hard to listen to.
- Men are made for combat; women are made for nurturing. Nature has not equipped women for soldiering.

Forget Wonder Woman and Zena the Warrior Princess as these stereo types are fictions that have no application to the real world which God has created; that a 125 pound female movie star playing the role of a police woman can out karate five 200 pound men ONLY happens in the imaginations of script writers.

### **A Lesson from Scripture**

*Deuteronomy 22:5 The woman (ishshah) shall not wear that which pertaineth (kelee') unto a man (geber), neither shall a man put on a woman's garment (simlah): for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.*

**First**, this command prohibits cross-dressing by men and women. Clothing styles vary from generation to generation, and people are free to wear any style they wish with one exception.

Women are restricted from wearing clothes distinctive to men, and men are barred from wearing women's apparel.

The Holy Scripture defines what is normal. Anything contrary to God's law is abnormal. Thus, acceptance of cross dressing and transvestism is a sign of a sick, deformed society.



Figure 35; Freepik

**Second**, in Hebrew the most common word for man is *ish* and the word for woman is *isha* or *ishshah*.

But, in this text the Hebrew word for man is *geber* which refers to a male that is a “*strong one*.” While the term *geber* refers to an *ish*, it refers to a particular kind of *ish* – a powerful, strong man in the community like a judge, soldier, business man, or defender of the family. All “gebers” are 100% male (*ish*), but not every *ish* is a *geber* (Genesis 6:4; Exodus 12:37; Joshua 10:2; 2 Samuel 1:25).

*Joshua 1:14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, **all the mighty men** (geber) of valour, and help them;*

**Third**, notice the difference between the two Hebrews words that refer to clothing in our text: *simlah* and *kelee'*.

The term *simlah* refers to clothing of all types (*garments or wraps*), and the term *kelee'* refers to equipment and accessories belonging to a soldier or judge.

*Deuteronomy 1:41 Then ye answered and said unto me, We have sinned against the LORD, we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his **weapons of war** (kelee'), **ye were ready to go up into the hill.***

*Isaiah 54:16 Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth **an instrument** (kelee': weapon) for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.*

When we associate *geber* with a *kelee'* we understand that the passage not only seeks to constrain people from wearing clothing distinctive of the opposite sex, but that the command *specifically* prohibits women from wearing military gear distinctive to a soldier: combat weapons, knives, spears, swords, boots, breastplates, arms wraps, helmets, and knapsacks.

**Fourth**, notice God addresses women first and men second. Why? Possibly, because history has shown us that women have a propensity to want to be like men . . . to have their role in society . . . and to control them.

In Genesis, God addressed Eve after the fall:

Unto the woman (*ishshah*) he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire (*teshuwqah*) shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule (*mashal*) over thee (Genesis 3:16).

The English word for “*desire*” comes from the Hebrew word “*teshuwqah*” which can refer to the desire to dominate and control a man. Note how these two Hebrew words are used by God toward Cain informing him of sin’s power exerting itself in order to control him.

*Genesis 4:7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be its **desire** (*teshuwqah*), but you must **rule** (*mashal*) over it.*

That is, just as sin sought to control and dominate Cain, women have a universal desire (*teshuwqah*) to rule over their husbands and to control them. But, its worse than this. Because men are prone to shuck responsibility, many wives feel compelled to do what that man refuses to do.

The human race fell in part because Eve sought to usurp authority over Adam. To prevent her sin from being repeated, the LORD God assigned her a role under the authority and protection of her husband.

In the ancient Chaldean language the symbol for husband was a horn ( ~ ) over a tent-shaped like symbol (n) which referred to the chief bull and protector of the wife in the home.

From these texts we learn that God has a plan for the sexes and that a healthy society makes a distinction between male and female roles. God made men to be leaders in the home, church, and nation and He strictly forbids women from having authority over men.

This can be seen in God’s instruction to the church.

*1 Timothy 2:12 But I suffer **not** a woman (Heb: *Ishshah*) to teach, nor **to usurp authority** (*authentio*) over the man, but to be in silence.*

The pronoun “I” does not refer to Paul’s preferences, but to his authority in Christ as an apostle to the churches.

In this text, the apostle prohibits women from exercising authority over men in the church.

The English word for *authority* comes from the Greek word “*authentio*” which refers to *the power to kill a man with one’s bare hands*. The ultimate authority over anything is to power to kill a thing. Thus, the apostle forbids women from having teaching-leadership roles over men in the church; that is, they are not

permitted to pray over the congregation (2:9) or to hold the office of a pastor. In fact, they are exhorted to remain silent – something hard for many carnal women to accept (see 1 Corinthians 14:28).

### **Illustration**

Thus, the Holy Scripture forbids Christian sisters from exerting authority over men in the family, the church, and the nation. These prohibitions eliminate any position of women over men such as a judge in the judiciary, soldier in the armed forces, or officer in law-enforcement.



However, it is not only possible, but highly probable a secular, rebellious, woman will seek positions of power where they can have authority over men: The courts and Congress are full of them; that is what the feminists call progress is actually societal regression.

Don't hear what is not being said. We are not saying that women are inferior to men or that their role in society is unimportant. God forbid! Women are often more talented than their husbands in many areas of life.

Rather, these texts inform us that God has a role for the sexes, and that a health society does not blur the dimorphism between men and women by cross dressing or by interchanging God-assigned gender roles.



God's model women are Sarah who called Abraham "lord" in her heart; the Hebrew midwives; the great the great Shunammite woman who assisted Elisha (2 Kings 4:8ff); the Proverbs 31 woman; the seven fold virtuous woman in Titus 2:3-5; and, the obedient wife of 1 Peter 3:1-6.

It is a detestable, offensive, abomination to God for a woman (*ishshah*) to be a judge, governor, combat soldier, or police officer; likewise, it is an abomination for a man (*ish*) to dress like a woman, put on lipstick, or to wear female jewelry.

### **A LESSON FROM POLITICS**

One of the best arguments against women in leadership comes from politics: Jezebel, Athaliah, Mary Queen of Scots, Queen Elizabeth, Angela Merkle of Germany, Ursula Von Der Leyen in Brussels, and Hillary Rodham Clinton.

A healthy society promotes men to leadership positions in every discipline; but, a degenerate society is characterized by female executives in all of man's institutions.



*Isaiah 3:12 As for my people, children are their oppressors (taskmasters), and women (ishshah) rule (mashal) over them. O my people, they (feminist icons) which lead thee cause thee to err (go astray), and destroy (swallow) the way of thy paths (of the Christian ethic).*

Enforcement is a problem. How can those Christians who have plunged into antinomianism, pitting law against grace, have any moral authority to address the legal and moral issues of our time?

It is time to repent individually and as a nation. But, deep sins call for deep repentance and lots of courage on the part of manly men (*gebers*).

“That which is against Divine Law is repugnant to society and is void” (Maxim of Law: Bouvier's Dictionary).

**\*illustration:**

A pastor named John Walden was teaching on the passage that prohibits women from speaking in church and to ask their husbands about Bible questions at home. Miffed, she approached the pastor after the service, “What do you mean ask my husband? He's an idiot when it comes to Bible knowledge.” Pastor John said, “Ma'am,” just try it.” She did.

A few days later she asked her husband a Bible trivia question, and he responded, “How should I know?” “Well,” she said, “Pastor John told me that I was to ask you the question, and that you should know it.” Immediately, the husband called pastor John to get the answer to his wife's question. He got it and shared his answer with his wife. A few days later she asked her husband a second question, then a third. Each time the man would get on the phone and call pastor John for the answer. You know, that man in time became quite a Bible student.

## **Women Are NOT Permitted to Teach Men**

### **1 Timothy 2:8-15**

The rise of women preachers has reached a crisis around the world.



The Bible in every way condemns women from being pastors of churches. They are prohibited from teaching men. Period!

Women have declared war on men, on the family, and on God's law order. We see it in the work place, the church, government, and the home.

Half the students in some seminaries are women . . . and they are looking for a job. While they appear to do good, the harm they do to the gospel of Jesus Christ and His church outweighs the good as iron outweighs plastic.

Estrogen has been injected into the church through the feminist movement . . . and this has made the church weak and effeminate. It is a tragedy. It is devilish. It is the catastrophe of our time.

***1 Timothy 2:12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.***

The verb "*I suffer not*" (evpitre,pw) should be translated, "***I do not permit.***" This verb is in the indicative, the mood of reality.[4] The use of "I" is not Paul the male-chauvinist-rabbi speaking, but Paul the apostle-not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead (2:7)!

What is it the apostle does not permit? "I do not permit a woman to teach or to usurp authority over the man."

The word "*teach*" is the Greek infinitive "*dida,skein.*" meaning the act of teaching. The word "*usurp*" comes from the Greek word "*auvqentei/n.*" Originally, *auvqentei/n* meant "to kill a man." Later, it came to mean "having absolute authority over a man." [5] Two negatives are used in the verse (*ouv*k and *ouvde.*). The negative forbids the action of teaching or the exercising the authority over males in some pastoral function.

The phrase "*over men*" should be translated "*of men*" (a genitive).

That is, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have the authority of men" in the church. Women should be in a learning role in the assembly of God's people, not in a teaching role where men are present.

This does not mean, however, women cannot teach other women, teach the youth in a church, or hold a staff position in a church. Paul expects women to disciple other women and to teach their children (Titus 2:2-5); i.e., gifted women have a responsibility to teach two-thirds of the church—other women and the children. But, God has not given our lovely sisters the responsibility to pastor a congregation.

A woman who takes on the role of a pastor is in rebellion against God's law-order; and, a congregation who calls a woman to preach has commits apostasy. Men must be disciplined by other qualified men, not by women.

Likewise, it is best if women disciple women in the order of Titus 2:3-5. This restriction on teaching males publically does not mean that a women has nothing to teach men or that in common communication a women cannot speak her mind or give her opinion on a subject. God forbid! Godly sisters have helped many a man from straying from the truth. But, it does eliminate any possibility of a women being a pastor/teacher in any church in the world that names the Name of Christ.

*1 Timothy 2:13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*

Paul gives the reason for this prohibition. Women are restricted from being in an authoritative teaching role belonging to men, because of (a) the order of creation, and (b) the danger of repeating the transgression of the fall. This instruction is necessary in order to prevent a repeat of Eve's transgression.

If a man sees a woman walk up to the pulpit to preach God's Word, he should show some testosterone, get up, and walk out!

[4] In the Korean culture, youth are taught to respect authority. They can do about anything they want unless something is impermissible. So, when a parent wants to restrain a child, the parent will say, "I forbid you to . . ." This is the strongest form of negation in that culture. Likewise, when Paul says, "I do not permit a women to teach," such terminology is Paul's strongest way of stating a negations—something that is just not permissible in the church. He is saying, "I forbid in the name of the Lord for a women to teach men formally from the pulpit in the church."

[5] To kill a man is to exercise absolute authority over the man. Paul does not permit women exercising authority over men or teaching or pastoring men in the congregation.

For a full exegesis of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 see

<https://nikeinsights.famguardian.org/forums/topic/the-danger-of-female-pastors/>

## **48. Is Deborah a Model for Female Church Leaders?**

**Judges 4-5**

If you are a theological feminist looking for Biblical justification for female leadership over men, Deborah is your gal. . . . Unless, of course, you are an objective Bible student comparing scripture with scripture.

Yes, Deborah did lead, but that doesn't mean she is a model for women to leadership in a church . . . or nation

That Isaiah walked around naked for three years doesn't nullify other Biblical admonitions to be clothed and to dress modestly. Hosea married a prostitute, but that that doesn't void the wisdom of avoiding harlots as a lifetime companion.

Thus, there are two ways to interpret the story of Deborah: (1) as a shining example of female leadership; or, (2) a shameful, humiliating example of a nation destitute of godly, male leaders.

The first interpretation advances the feminist cause; the second censors the feminist ambition to rule over men.

Deborah's leadership in the nation's crisis is not a commendation of female leadership, but a condemnation of female leadership . . . for the following reasons:

(1) This passage, like all texts, must submit to the whole of Scripture, and the whole of Scripture disparages female dominion in marriage, the church, and the nation.

- God created Adam as Head of the Human Race and charged him with dominion over creation (Genesis 1-2).
- Because Eve usurped authority over Adam sin entered the world (Genesis 3);
- Because the Word informs that because sin entered paradise, the woman would seek to rule over her husband.
- Because of her deception the LORD assigned a role under her husband's authority (Genesis 3:16).
- Because Isaiah informs us a universal fact that the rise of women to positions of power is a sign of disgrace: "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths" (Isaiah 3:12).
- Females leading the church and engaging in doctrinal issues is forbidden (1 Corinthians 14:34ff; 1 Timothy 2:9ff).

(2) Deborah's leadership in the nation was not a sign of strength, but a sign of a weak, demoralized culture (Judges 5).

(3) Deborah's leadership in the nation provided proof of claim that men had become rebellious against God's law-order and neglectful of their duties to

God: "And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD,"  
(Judges 5:1)

(4) The person mentioned in God's Hall of Fame for their act of faith is not Deborah, but Barak who overcame his reluctance to provide military leadership (Hebrews 11:32).

(5) This story does not exalt Deborah or encourage the leadership of women in a country; rather, it shows the spiritual decline of the nation at its nadir in the Book of Judges. Women rise to power, not because they are capable of leading, but because men are weak and passive.

(6) Deborah's glory is the nation's shame; that is, the rise of women to power is not a proof of female competence; rather, it is proof that males have failed to lead and need to repent.

Israel is in ruins when Deborah comes to power, and it is marvelously delivered from serfdom, not because Deborah led, but because Barak and other men sucked in courage, took up their swords, and marched to the killing fields (Judges 5): "Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardies their lives unto the death in the high places of the field."

(7) Although Deborah acted as a Divine agent and occupied the office of a Judge in Israel, it seems she acted consistent with the Divine plan to restore patriarchal leadership to the impotent nation. The glories of her praise hymn was not an ode to women, but a theme surrounding the courage of disaffected men coming together risking their lives to save the nation from tyranny and slavery (Judges 5).

(8) Finally, Deborah describes herself as a "mother in Israel" with no intent to subjugate the patriarchy to a matriarchy. She sees herself as a mother over that house on behalf of the father — as a mother urging adult sons to act like men (cf. Numbers 36; Proverbs 31).

She doesn't call herself the "ruler of the house" nor was she seeking the position of the patriarch (cf. Numbers 30). Of equal significance, Samuel does not list Deborah as one of the judges of Israel (1 Samuel 12:9–14).

Deborah's great accomplishment was not leading men, but prodding Barak to discard his apron strings, to put on his man pants, and to lead the armies of Israel into battle against Sisera as a God's appointed Judge in the nation.

*Ezekiel 22:30 "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none."*

## 49. Doctrines of Demons

**Q: What are the Doctrines of Demons?**

*1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart (apostasize) from the faith (Orthodox Christian Faith), giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy (think of the liberal media's fake news); having their conscience seared with a hot iron (promoting unconscionable acts) 3 Forbidding (hindering, withholding) to marry (by living together), and commanding to abstain from meats (radical vegetarianism), which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*

When you think of the doctrines of demons, don't think of one eyed monsters spittin' out four letter words. Think of rich men in blue suits and old ladies blabbering to anyone who will listen.

There are so many doctrines of demons. It is not only impossible but undesirable to list them all. But, here are a few:

### **New Age Law of Attraction:**

**Ophrah:**

*"Without exception, every human being has the ability to transform any weakness or suffering into strength, power, perfect peace, health, and abundance" (Living the Secret).*

**George\_Bernard\_Shaw:**

*"Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine and at last you create what you will."*

**Jack\_Canfield:**

*"The Law of Attraction is the most powerful law in the universe. Just like gravity, it is always in effect, always in motion. It is working in your life at this very moment. You are always in a state of creation. You are creating your reality in every moment of every day. You are creating your future with every single thought: either consciously or subconsciously. You can't take a break from it and decide not to create because creation never stops."*

**The\_serpent:**

*"Ye shall be as gods."*

## **Feminism:**

**Irina\_Dunn** –

*“A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle.”*

**Roseanne\_Barr:**

*“The thing women have yet to learn is nobody gives you power. You just take it. ”*

**Jessica Valenti:** “The worst thing you can call a girl is a girl.”

*Revelation 2:20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest (tolerate, permit) that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*

*Genesis 3:16 “ . . . your desire shall be to rule over your husband.”*

## **Promotion of Homosexuality:**

*“These are just some of the ways U.S. public school students will learn about LGBTQ – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender queer – history in a growing number of states moving to mandate inclusive K-12 curriculum.” (Reuters)*

**Sarah Schwartz Report:**

*“Four States Now Require Schools to Teach LGBT History.” (Illinois, California, Colorado, New Jersey)*

## **Gender-bending:**

**Joe Biden:**

*“There are at least three,” Biden told an Iowa college student at the Iowa State Fair, after she asked him how many genders he believes exist.*

Traditional boys choir sued for gender-bias. What’s next: suing women’s synchronized swimming, diving, and women’s gymnastics for gender bias?

God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33).

## **Women’s Power to Kill Babies:**

**Any Ryan:**

*“One method of destroying a concept is by diluting its meaning. Observe that by ascribing rights to the unborn, i.e. the nonliving, the anti-abortionists obliterate the rights of the living.”*

**Katha Pollitt:**

*"Young women need to know that abortion rights and abortion access are not presents bestowed or retracted by powerful men (or women) — Presidents, Supreme Court justices, legislators, —but freedoms won, as freedom always is, by people struggling on their own behalf."*

**Misandry, Racism, and Hate:**

**Olivia Neutered John:** "Kill all men (starting with the white ones)"

**University of South Dakota** Tells White Students to Stop Taking Up Space.

False Petition Signed to Remove White-man icon on crosswalk signals.

What's next: Demanding all brides wear black dresses and all morticians wear white suits?

**New Age:**

**Dalai Lama:**

*"The basic fact is that humanity survives through kindness, love and compassion. That human beings can develop these qualities is their real blessing."*

**Buddha:**

*"What you are is what you have been, and what you will be is what you do now."*

**Neo-paganism Goddess Movement:**

**Eva Morales:**

*"Sooner or later, we will have to recognise that the Earth has rights, too, to live without pollution. What mankind must know is that human beings cannot live without Mother Earth, but the planet can live without humans."*

**Thich Nhat Hanh:**

*"Sooner or later, we will have to recognise that the Earth has rights, too, to live without pollution. What mankind must know is that human beings cannot live without Mother Earth, but the planet can live without humans."*

**St. Basil the Great:**

*"O sinner, be not discouraged, but have recourse to Mary in all your necessities. Call her to your assistance, for such is the divine Will that she should help in every kind of necessity."*

**Pope Paul John II:**

*"Let us offer ourselves to God, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in the act of thanks and willingness . . . "*

**RCC's General Confession:**

*"I confess to Almighty God, to the blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly."*

*"The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead [their] dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. " (See Jeremiah 4:14-15).*

**Universalism and All Religions Are Good:**

**Ramakrishna:**

*"All religions are true. God can be reached by different religions. Many rivers flow by many ways but they fall into the sea. They all are one."*

**Vegetarianism:**

**George Bernard Shaw:**

*"Animals are my friends...and I don't eat my friends."*

**Leo Tolstoy:**

*"A man can live and be healthy without killing animals for food; therefore, if he eats meat, he participates in taking animal life merely for the sake of his appetite. And to act so is immoral."*

**Hindering marriage:**

Consider the RCC's veneration of virgins and celibates as true, holy saints and the prohibition of ministers being married.

Consider the RCC's veneration of Mary as the "Mother of God" and the papal doctrine of her perpetual virginity.

**Cher:**

*"Men should be like Kleenex: soft, strong, disposable."*

**Ellen DeGeneris:**

*"I believe one day a 'ban on gay marriage' will sound totally ridiculous. In the meantime, I will continue to speak out for equality for all of us."*



**Elephant Journal:**

*"I'm a Love Coach & I don't believe in Marriage."*

**Abhijit Naskar:**

*"Love has no gender – compassion has no religion – character has no race."*

**Reddit:**

*"Why would you marry someone who you've never lived with? Sure you might think you know their habits and quirks but do you really?"*

**Aveda King:** In the 21st Century, the anti-traditional marriage community is in league with the anti-life community, and together with the NAACP and other sympathizers, they are seeking a world where homosexual marriage and abortion will supposedly set the captives free.

**Apostasy:**

*2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first (apostasia), and that man of sin (apostate clergyman) be revealed, the son of perdition . . . whose coming is after the working of Satan (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 9).*

**Q:** Has Christ given his church any such power over devils?

*Answer: "Yes, he has; see Matthew 10:1; Mark 3:15; Luke 9:1. And that this power was not to die with the apostles, nor to cease after the apostolic age, we learn from the perpetual practice of the church, and the experience of all ages." (Albert Barnes).*

## 50. Should the Church Love Homosexuals?

*"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" – 1 Corinthians 6:9-10*

Dear Pastor,

**Q:** I am frustrated with Christian apathy and those pastors calling for us to love perverts and pledge allegiance to America, the Sodomite nation. What say you?

A: We offer grace to the weak and sick, but we do have to tolerate the fuzzy logic of Sodomite-loving, granny euthanizing ACLU rebels. These kind of people need confrontation, rebuke, and a kick in their assets by one of God's attack lambs.

Those who love the Lord, hate evil.

How can you be a good man and not have evil . . . and those sold out to its powers? Hate is an attribute of God which Christians need to appropriate and emulate.

Jesus called Herod, the first century murderer and adulterer, a sly weasel-like "fox", and when Elymas the sorcerer hindered Paul's gospel, Paul slapped the man with this insult: " O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" – Acts 13:10

Today, Paul might say, "*Hey, you pony-tailed, celebrity-adoring ignoramus, aren't you late for your Flag Burning Trash Trump Anonymous meeting?*" You get the point.

God's throne is one of justice and grace!! Life calls for the exercise of both in the course of human interaction. Christians have been eating too much honey-roasted, sugar slap cereals and not enough iron-man Wheaties. Believers are sweet, but way too nice. Our times call for just, courageous, intolerant, hoof-stomping, bramble-tested, indignation-snorting, pasture-fighting guard sheep that show some teeth.

-----

Q: Aren't we supposed to be peace loving and kind to the LGBTQ community?

A: It is not possible to have peace with all men in a world governed by narcissists and psychopaths.

Despots offer peace on their terms: comply or die. We exercise sweet reasonableness . . . but, we DO NOT SEEK peace by compromising our faith . . . or principles on an issue.

Americans are in the middle of a political, verbal civil war. Division is good. The Democrats want peace, and they offer peace, if you convert to DEMONOCRACY. But, as a Christian, NO-CAN-DO. If they want peace, they need to repent of the pride, self-will, abortions, Sodomy, and communism. There is no way under the Sun that a Christians can find common ground and "get along" with abortionists and Sodomites. None. Zero. Zilch.

## 51. In Defense of Hate

In listening to the news, you'd think that hate is a bad thing, but hate is as much a Christian virtue as love.

There is a madness among politicians who tell us that love is the remedy for all of man's social ills, and that hatred towards Sodomites, baby-butchers, and rapists is the root of all evil.

The pagan power brokers pass legislation making hate towards anything or anyone a crime (Psalm 94:20).

Sweden jailed a Christian pastor for preaching a sermon against homosexuality in 2003.

The Canadians moved to pass a law (Bill C-250) making it illegal to promote hatred or violence against the LGBTQ Community.

Ontario legalized gay marriage in 2015. They ruled that denying homosexual couples the right to marry violated "the dignity of same-sex relationships." The dignity of what?

In California, Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law S.B. 777 outlawing criticism of homosexuality in CA public schools.

Facebook regularly censors speech that disapproves of gays, Muslims, and illegal immigration. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Microsoft signed an EU hate speech code. Think of it! Technocrats, with no moral training, are forcing their morality down the throats of their clients!

In Knoxville, the News Sentinel refused to place an ad by a Christian bookstore because the ad included the offensive word "Christian" in it (July 2016).

Apparently, it's O.K. to hate Christians, but not O.K. to hate liars, thieves, and Sodomites. But, to be fair there was so much pressure on the newspaper, they recanted.

Lesbian Megan Rapinoe, soccer star, said, "we have to love more and hate less." (July 2019).

What a clever way to control the world! Pass laws making it illegal to speak against Islam, faggots, lesbians, Sodomites, trannies, fornicators, adulterers, abortionists, racist blacks, or feminists.

In these people's minds Christians must hold hands with queers and racketeers and sing "Kumbaya." And, if you don't weirdos, bam, slam, wham!

It's time to get back to the Bible and bring some common sense back to demoralized humanity.

**First**, hate is an attribute of God. Hate is ever much a Christian virtue as love.

Zechariah 8:17 . . . do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the LORD."

**Second**, the Word of God says that God is holy, and it commands Christians to be holy as He is holy.

The Spirit urges us to hold Him up as the canon for all behavior.

*Leviticus 19:2 "Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.*

*1 Peter 1:15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,*

God is the standard of what is right and wrong, and men are called to imitate His transient attributes. Christ called us to be "perfect" as our Heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48); that is, to love what He loves and to hate what He hates.

**Third**, we know that God hated at least one man.

*Romans 9:13 As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."*

**Fourth**, we know that God hates the wicked and has promised to destroy them.

*Deuteronomy 7:10 and repays to their face those who hate him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates him. He will repay him to his face.*

*Deuteronomy 7:15 And the LORD will take away from you all sickness, and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you knew, will he inflict on you, but he will lay them on all who hate you.*

*Psalms 21:8 Your hand will find out all your enemies; your right hand will find out those who hate you.*

**Fifth**, we know that David, a man after God's own heart, the "sweet psalmist of Israel," hated God's enemies.

He deemed the development of hate in his heart for evildoers as a virtue and not a vice. How can a man be a good man if he doesn't hate evil . . . and evildoers?

*Psalms 26:5 I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked.*

*Psalms 31:6 I hate those who pay regard to worthless idols, but I trust in the LORD.*

*Psalms 139:21-22 Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do*

*I not loathe those who rise up against you? I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.*

[Note the object of hate. David not only hates evil deeds, but “those” who hate the Trinity.]

Christians would do well to remember Samson who prayed to God to be avenged on the Philistines. He killed more of Philistines in his death by pulling down the temple than he had in his life.

In love of justice, the Hebrew prophets not only hated their enemies, but also reveled in their suffering. After Phinehas speared a fornicating Israelite and a Moabite prostitute to the ground with a spear, he was rewarded with the everlasting priesthood. Samuel cut Agag to pieces before the Lord. Deborah composed a song in Jael’s slaying of Sisera in every bloody detail. Queen Esther requested the dead sons of Haman hanged on gallows because the Jewish remnant wanted not only the death of enemies but also their shame and disgrace.

Hate can be a virtue when it acts lawfully to urge civil government to cleanse society of evildoers. Isn’t this the whole purpose of law?

**Sixth**, knowing that God hates sin motivates us to exhort men to flee the wrath to come.

*2 Corinthians 5:11 Knowing therefore the terror (phobos) of the Lord, we persuade men;*

The context of this text is the judgment of God. It is not the love of God that provokes the Christian witness, but the fear of God.

**Seventh**, just as love must find practical expression that culminates in action towards people, hate must find practical expression and toward evildoers.

*“Just as it impossible to have true love without works that benefit people around us, it is impossible to hate evil and not hate those who cause injuries to others.”*

The Christian must not only hate evil, but evildoers. Hate is not in the environment. It is in people! And, God’s people are called to hate those who manufacture lawlessness and wholesale it to the rest of humanity to the injury of mankind.

*1 John 3:18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*

*Psalms 6:8 Depart from me, all you workers of evil, for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.*

*Psalms 64:2 Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, from the*

*throng of evildoers,*

*Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.*

*Amos 5:15 Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.*

*Micah 3:1-3 You rulers (politicians) . . . is it not for you to know justice? You who hate the good and love the evil, who tear the skin from off my people and their flesh from off their bones, who eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from them, and break their bones in pieces and chop them up like meat . . ."*

**Seventh**, we know that hate is a virtue if directed toward evil (evildoers). But, hate can quickly turn into a vice if it is unleashed on the innocent. "Innocent lives matter!" Sin at work in the heart can twist, contort, and circumrotate men into loving evil and hating good.

*Psalm 38:19 But my foes are vigorous, they are mighty, and many are those who hate me wrongfully.*

**In conclusion:** it is not a vice to hate evil and those who sell themselves to evil to the injury of others. It is a vice to tolerate evil and those who manufacture it.

Likewise, it is not a virtue to tolerate the promotion of LGBTQ perversions to the degradation of our youth. It is a virtue to expose, shame, resist, combat, dispute and contend with faggots who would turn universities into Sodom and Gomorrah.

Enough of this nonsense about hate crimes and hate speech.

Our world is better off when good men hate evil. And, it is worse off when pagan humanist hold up sweet, ooey-gooey, sugar slap, candy-cane love as the cure all for ISIS, rape, beheadings, terrorism, murder, Sodomy, and fraud.

In fact, isn't the reason Germany, France, England, Sweden, and America are experiencing so many acts of terrorism is because Merkle-Obama et al. have redefined good, turned a blind eye to evil, and institutionalized saccharin, sunflower, turtledove tolerance towards jihadist Muslims?

This is the error of our time. The pendulum has swung to its extreme left. Midnight rules the day. Pervs parade their immorality with pride. Men love weeds and hate vegetables. Good is now evil; and, evil is now good. Hate for the wicked is a vice; and love for the wicked is somehow a virtue.

Oh, Lord, have mercy!

# 52. First Day Sabbath

*Sunday: The Call to Keep the First-Day Sabbath*

## Bible Study Notes

### Proclamation of Freedom

*Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.*

*1 Corinthians 16:2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.*

*Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet*

Celebrating the Christian Sabbath on Sunday was an established tradition even in the first century. It proclaimed freedom under God's rule.

But, the importance and significance of the Sabbath has been clearly translated away! The Greek word "*Sabbaton*" is translated "day" or "week" by modern translators and thus clouds its significance. The First Day Sabbath; i.e., the term Sabbath (*Sabbaton*) is used in the following text demonstrating that Sunday was clearly considered a Christian Sabbath early in the church:

- Matthew 28:1 "first day of the week" = mi,an sabba,twn or first day Sabbath
- Mark 16:2, 9 "first day of the week" = mia/| tw/n sabba,twn or first day Sabbath
- Luke 24:1 "first day of the week" = prw,th| sabba,tou or first day Sabbath
- John 20:1 "first day of the week" = mia/| tw/n sabba,twn or first day Sabbath
- John 20:19 "first day of the week" = th/| mia/| sabba,twn or first day Sabbath
- Acts 20:7 "first day of the week" = th/| mia/| tw/n sabba,twn or first day Sabbath
- 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 "first day of the week" = mi,an sabba,tou or first day Sabbath

Paul ordered the Corinthians to set aside an offering on the first day of the week (Sunday) for the saints in Jerusalem. The word "*week*" is the Greek word *sabbatou*. The genitive *sabbatou* is the attributive to *mian* which should be translated "*first day*"; i.e., "*the first day Sabbath*" or "*the first day of the Sabbath.*"

The imperative *titheto* {to set aside) is definitely connected with collections, but one has to assume that the early Christians under Paul's care had already established the first day of the week as a Sabbath. To connect "orders" in verse one with the "Sabbath" in verse two has an indirect but logical connection. While it is not a silver bullet, it certainly does strengthen the concept of the "Lord's day" in conjunction with Revelation 1:10.

Since the Lord was raised on this blessed day, the Christian Sabbath was separated from the Jewish Sabbath and superseded it in importance by virtue of the "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Since the Christian Sabbath is connected with Israel's three feasts (the wave offering, Pentecost, and feast of tabernacles), Sunday commemorates the LORD's *work of creation, redemption, and sanctification* by virtue of our Lord's death, burial, and resurrection on and in behalf of believers.

**The goal of history is a Sabbath rest** which is none other than the Kingdom of God.

The Christian Sabbath is **not** the same as the Jewish Sabbath.

The Hebrew Sabbath remains *a shadow* while the Christian Sabbath is the *substance* (Colossians 2:16ff). The Hebrew Sabbath *typified* the hope of Christ's redemptive rest while the Christian Sabbath tastes the first fruits *reality* of that rest.

Had not the early Christians made a clean break from the Jewish Sabbath [established discontinuity] Christianity might have only been another Jewish cult. This discontinuity from the Saturday Sabbath fostered spiritual maturity in the church. Christ's resurrection bolted to the top of the list of the most important events in human history.

On the Jewish Sunday, Christ conquered man's fundamental problem [death]. He was God's wave offering; God's First fruits; God's holy one; and God's New Creation.

**In Christ, the holy God and sinful man find redemptive rest.**

Consequently, *it was quintessential that Christians separate themselves from the Jewish Sabbath and remember God's greater creative work in Christ on Sunday, the First-Day Sabbath.* And, it appears it was so ordered by apostolic command in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.

Thus, powerful *discontinuity* severed the Jewish Sabbath from the Christian Sabbath.

But, there is also *continuity*. Both the Jewish holy day and the Christian holy day are called a Sabbath. Both days were a day of rest. Both days were holy.



But, celebration of the Christians Sabbath forecast a higher order and deeper significance.

### **Facts on the Sabbath**

**The meaning of the word “Sabbath” means “cease” or “desist” or “rest.”**

*“The pattern of the Sabbath is God’s creative rest; the goal of the Sabbath is man’s redemptive rest” [Rushdoony, p. 128].*

**There are three kinds of Sabbaths:** (1) the creation Sabbath, (2) the Hebrew Sabbath, and the (2) Christian Sabbath. The Christians Sabbath is called “*The Lord’s Day,*” “*the First Day Sabbath,*” and sometimes “*the Eighth Day Sabbath.*”

**There is no evidence Hebrew people observed any type of Sabbath prior to the Exodus** (Exodus 16). To the Hebrews, the Saturday Sabbath meant the following:

It was a day of rest and cessation from work (Exodus 16:14-36; 20:8-11; 34:21; Deuteronomy 5:12-15). It was a remembrance of God’s original creation and His rest. It was a time to remember their deliverance from Egypt (Deuteronomy 5:12-15); “Remember” was political reflection on Israel’s former enslavement in Egypt and deliverance from bondage by redemption.

The Sabbath was **not** primarily for worship, but for rest and reflection [Deuteronomy. 5:12-15].

It was a time to remember their covenant with God. It was **not**, however, a day of worship.

**No record of Sabbath keeping emerged before the Exodus.** The Saturday Sabbath attained significance sometime after Israel’s departure from Egypt [Exodus 16:23, 35, 26, 29]. Thus, when God said, “Remember the Sabbath,” it was not something Israel was unfamiliar with at Mt. Sinai.

Under bondage, Israel worked 365 days a year for Pharaoh. **The Sabbath charted blessedness to the nation as a result of their redemption from slavery.** The flag of freedom blew in the winds over Israel; and, to protect that freedom, Sabbath keeping reviewed God’s redemption from tribute, slavery, and bondage.

**Severe laws enforced the Sabbath** [Exodus. 20:8-11; 34:21; Leviticus. 23:3; Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Jeremiah 17:22]. Gates had to be shut [Nehemiah 13:19]; no burdens could be carried [Jeremiah 17:21] or wine pressed [Nehemiah 13:15]; no sticks could be gathered [Numbers 15:32-35]; no fires could be kindled [Ezekiel. 35:3]; no harvesting [Nehemiah. 13:15]; no food could be sold or bought [Nehemiah. 10:31; 13:15]. However, life could be saved and necessities performed [Mark 3:4; Luke 6:9; Matthew 12:10-13; 12:11; Luke 14:5].

*The Day of Resurrection introduced Christians to God's redemptive rest which was on Sunday.*

[Note: The Hebrew Sabbath followed the *lunar calendar* or Egyptian calendar of 12 months of 30 days, and therefore, could not possibly correspond to our modern Saturday which follows a *solar calendar*. **Not only** is Saturday keeping the wrong date for the Jewish Sabbath, it stings with theological blunders].

### **Meaning of the Christian Sabbath**

□ **The brightness of the First Day Sabbath rest fulfills the shadow of the Hebrew Saturday Sabbath;** that is, it restores the original Sabbath (Genesis 1) and reestablishes God's order for the world.

□ **It is superior to the Hebrew Sabbath just as spiritual circumcision is superior to physical circumcision** [Colossians 2:11].

□ **The Christian Sabbath is the Queen of holy days** while the Hebrew Sabbath operates as a mere handmaid of royalty. Just as gold is more precious than copper, the First Day Sabbath is more treasured than the Hebrew Sabbath. It cost God a lamb to redeem Israel out of bondage to Pharaoh, but it cost God His Son to save his people from their sins [ Matthew 1:21].

God made Adam and Eve on the sixth day and instructed them on the dominion mandate. God rested on the Seventh Day. The Seventh Day was man's first full day and man was to share in that rest.

When Adam rejected God's law-order on that day, God's rest was interrupted. Man's rest ceased as sin entered the world; that is, the Seventh Day became man's first day of labor / burden.

In His grace, God gave Adam and Eve a promise of a Savior that would destroy sin and death, and restore the Creative Rest.

In Exodus, man was commanded to rest on his seventh day of work in anticipation of the coming of Christ and the ultimate Jubilee.

When Christ rose from the dead on the first day, his redemptive work was finished and his victory over Satan, sin, and death complete.

Therefore, to celebrate Sunday as the Sabbath, **is a celebration of the accomplishments of Christ and His restoration of the original order.** So, *the Sunday Sabbath rest established by Christianity now coincides with God's original creative rest.*

□ **The First Day Sabbath commemorates the Lord's resurrection from the dead** (Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1; Acts 20:7). On this day, He demonstrated His defeat of Satan, sin, and death. Thus, celebration of the Lord's Day as a Sabbath is far superior in its excellencies to the Hebrew Sabbath. Likewise, its penalties!! Violating the Hebrew Sabbath warranted the death penalty, while the neglect of

Christ and the meaning of the First Day Sabbath results in eternal condemnation and death (John 3:36).

□ **The First Day Sabbath excels as a day of worship and rest and instruction in God's Word**— a day of joy and celebration of our Lord's triumphs over sin and death; of the "new creation" of which Christ is the Firstfruits.

□ **The First Day Sabbath operates for the development of holiness or sanctification in the church.** The concept of holiness is carried forward. While Christians are called to develop holiness every day, one day is commanded to be set aside because of human weakness.

□ **The First Day Sabbath commemorates the Christ event and the marvelous benefits available in the gospel.** In taking of the bread and the cup, we remember the incarnation, life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and session of the Lord Jesus Christ. The blessings of the Age to Come have been thrust into our experience to enjoy in a first fruits way.

According to Deuteronomy 5:12-15, the goal of the Sabbath was freedom for man and beast via a reflection on political freedom; mighty redemption, the maintenance of freedom through obedience to God's law; the defense of freedom through war; and, the defeat of political enemies. The Christian Sabbath centers on Christ's victory over Satan, sin, and death. God's law forbids a Christian to be a slave of man (1 Corinthians 7:23). Thus, honoring the First Day Sabbath is a safeguard against being man's servant and a government slave.

□ **God intended the First Day Sabbath to be a time to repair broken fellowship and renew our vows and commitment to the risen Savior.** The remembrance of the New Covenant of His blood and man's duties to Christ shines as the lofty purpose of the Christian Sabbath.

□ **The Christian Sabbath breached the legal status of the Hebrew Sabbath.**

The penalties connected to the Hebrew Sabbath are not carried forth into the practice of the Christian Sabbath. There is no penalty attached to laxity or even betrayal of the First-Day Sabbath.

But, you would think that something that carried the death penalty attached to it would have some relevance to the Christian era. The neglect of the First-Day Sabbath does solicit death to work in the heart of the believer; and, indicates Christian surrender to the advancement of paganism in the culture. Neglect of Christ and the rest He offers results in eternal condemnation for the unbeliever. Obedience means life; disobedience means death. To the Christian, He is the Vine; we are the branches. Apart from him we can do nothing. The Christian Sabbath, therefore, trains the believer to abide in Christ.

The Hebrews worked six days and then rested; the Christian rests on the First Day Sabbath and then works—not to earn salvation, but to live out a life of grateful obedience to God’s law through a life of love. He shines **as God’s poem** (poeima) to a world in darkness (Ephesians 2:10)

The Sabbath meant rest, restoration, regeneration, forgiveness, cancellation of debt and restoration to the weary [Deuteronomy 15:1-6].

**□ The Christians Sabbath is also a day of restoration, regeneration, and forgiveness—a day of cancelling debts, a day of announcing God’s jubilee through the proclamation of the gospel.**

The Sabbath meant respect for family, for servants, for animals, for the land, and for freedom from debt. The Christian Sabbath reminds us that: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” [Galatians 3:28].

The first Sabbath, God’s Sabbath, had no evening. It was interrupted by Adam’s sin. Thus, God’s seventh day rest became man’s first day of work and only intensified as death settled over creation.

A weekly day of rest is unknown in other cultures. The wicked have no rest [Isaiah 57:20-21].

*“Remember” the Sabbath took Israel back to the original creation with God as the model of work and rest. The wicked search for rest, but will never find it outside of God’s law. The proletarianization of man promised wealth and rest, but the idealism of Marxism [Stalin and Mao] killed and enslaved more men and women than any political system in history. Few revolutions compare with the cruel bloody slaughter of millions of Russian Christians.*

### **Quotes by the Church Fathers**

*..every Lord’s day, hold your solemn assemblies, and rejoice: for he will be guilty of sin who fasts on the Lord’s day, being the day of the resurrection... (Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 7, pg. 449).*

*“And on the day of our Lord’s resurrection, which is the Lord’s day, meet more diligently, sending praise to God that made the universe by Jesus, and sent Him to us, and condescended to let Him suffer, and raised Him from the dead. Otherwise what apology will he make to God who does not assemble on that day to hear the saving word concerning the resurrection...?” (Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 7, pg. 423).*

*“But every Lord’s day, do ye gather yourselves together, and break*

*bread, and give thanksgiving after having confessed your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure. But let no one that is at variance with his fellow come together with you, until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice may not be profaned. For this is that which was spoken by the Lord...* [Matt. 5:23-24] (*The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, Chap. 14:1, Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 7, page 381*).

*“On the day of the resurrection of the Lord, that is, the Lord’s day, assemble yourselves together, without fail, giving thanks to God, and praising Him for those mercies God has bestowed upon you through Christ, and has delivered you from ignorance, error, and bondage, that your sacrifice may be unspotted, and acceptable to God, who has said concerning His universal Church: “In every place shall incense and a pure sacrifice be offered unto me; for I am a great King, saith the Lord Almighty, and my name is wonderful among the heathen, [Malachi 1:11, 14]” (Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 7, pg. 471).*

*“they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn oath not to (do) any wicked deeds, never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of good food — but food of an ordinary and innocent kind” (Pliny, Letters to Trajan, Book X, in The Loeb Classical Library, eds E. Capps,, T.E. Page, W.H.D. Rouse, Pliny Letters II, translated by William Melmoth. [London: William Heinemann, MCMXV], p. 403.)*

*“Moreover God says to the Jews, ‘Your new moons and Sabbaths 1 cannot endure.’ You see how he says, ‘The present Sabbaths are not acceptable to me, but the Sabbath which I have made in which, when I have rested from all things, I will make the beginning of the eighth day which is the beginning of another world.’ Wherefore we Christians keep the eighth day for joy, on which also Jesus arose from the dead and when he appeared ascended into heaven. (15:8f, The Epistle of Barnabas, 100 AD, Ante- Nicene Fathers , vol. 1, pg. 147).*

*..those who have persecuted and do persecute Christ, if they do not repent, shall not inherit anything on the holy mountain. But the Gentiles, who have believed on Him, and have repented of the sins which they have committed, they shall receive the inheritance along with the patriarchs and the prophets, and the just men who are*

*descended from Jacob, even although they neither keep the Sabbath, nor are circumcised, nor observe the feasts. Assuredly they shall receive the holy inheritance of God”(Dialogue With Trypho the Jew, 150-165 AD, Ante-Nicene Fathers , vol.1, page 207).*

*“But if we do not admit this, we shall be liable to fall into foolish opinion, as if it were not the same God who existed in the times of Enoch and all the rest, who neither were circumcised after the flesh, nor observed Sabbaths, nor any other rites, seeing that Moses enjoined such observances... For if there was no need of circumcision before Abraham, or of the observance of Sabbaths, of feasts and sacrifices, before Moses; no more need is there of them now, after that, according to the will of God, Jesus Christ the Son of God has been born without sin, of a virgin sprung from the stock of Abraham.”(Dialogue With Trypho the Jew, 150-165 AD, Ante-Nicene Fathers , vol. 1, page 206).*

*“There is no other thing for which you blame us, my friends, is there than this? That we do not live according to the Law, nor, are we circumcised in the flesh as your forefathers, nor do we observe the Sabbath as you do.” (Dialogue with Trypho 10:1. In verse 3 the Jew Trypho acknowledges that Christians ‘do not keep the Sabbath.’)*

*“But Sunday is the day on which we hold our common assembly, because it is the first day of the week and Jesus our saviour on the same day rose from the dead.” (First apology of Justin, Ch 68).*

*“The commandment of circumcision, requiring them always to circumcise the children on the eighth day, was a type of the true circumcision by which we are circumcised from error and evil through the resurrection from the dead on the first day of the week of Jesus Christ our Lord. For the first day of the week, although it is the first of all days, yet according to the number of the days in a cycle is called the eighth (while still remaining the first)” (Dialogue 41:4).*

*“We are always together with one another. And for all the things with which we are supplied we bless the Maker of all through his Son Jesus Christ and through his Holy Spirit. And on the day called Sunday there is a gathering together in the same place of all who live in a city or a rural district. (There follows an account of a Christian worship service, which is quoted in VII.2.) We all make our assembly in common on the day of the Sun, since it is the first day, on which God changed the darkness and matter and made the world, and Jesus Christ our Savior arose from the dead on the same day. For they crucified him on the day before Saturn’s day, and on the day after (which is the day of the Sun) he appeared to his apostles and taught*

*his disciples these things.” (Apology, 1, 67:1-3, 7; First Apology, 145 AD, Ante-Nicene Fathers , Vol. 1, pg. 186).*

## Part II

### Importance of the Christian Sabbath

The NT lacks a command to keep the Sabbath unless it is 1 Corinthians 16:1-2. Unlike the other nine Commandments, the command to obey the Sabbath lacks a moral attribute, a direct reflection of some moral virtue attached to the character of God—unless that attribute is holiness.

Since the Ten Commandments are a summary of the entire law, it seems fitting to place the ceremonial laws, dietary laws, and festival laws as case law under the Sabbath law; that is, unlike the law of murder, there is nothing inherently right or wrong, harmful or malignant, about observing a particular 24 hour period of the week in preference to another; i.e., no direct harm to mankind occurs by resting on Wednesday as opposed to Saturday (or Sunday).

Saturday Sabbath breaking was only right or wrong because God ordained this law for a season in Israel’s history for a typical purpose.

Even Paul, a radical rabbi with ultimate respect for God’s Law-word abandoned the Saturday Hebrew Sabbath in careful deference to the First-Day Sunday Sabbath without a violation of conscience.

But, even here there seems to be a tremendous amount of freedom on how this day is celebrated.

□ **The Christian Sabbath was a firm practice in the NT.**

The term “*ordered*” in 1 Corinthians 16:1 is closely associated with laying aside collections for the saints ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE SABBATH (SUNDAY).

Surely, something that had the death penalty attached to in the OT should have an important application in the NT.

If Paul under the inspiration of the Spirit ordered the church to collect an offering on the *first sabbatou* of the week, setting aside Sunday as the Christian Sabbath has merit and force. Therefore, I conclude the Christian Sabbath was critical to development of the church, for instruction in the gospel, for fellowship, for communion, for the development of holiness. To treat Sunday like an ordinary day violates Scripture.

The rest of Hebrews 10:25 meant confidence in God’s work at Calvary. By keeping the Christian Sabbath, believers remember the person of Christ, His historical resurrection, the meaning of His history, the effects of Christ’s

accomplishments on the cross for us, and our duty to be sanctified unto Him — thus, in keeping the First Day Sabbath, we remember the glories of the gospel.

Sabbath keeping was so important, the death penalty was attached to its violations.

**□ Neglect of the Christian Sabbath not only invites death to work in the individual heart, its neglect assists the advancement of corruption in the culture.**

Thus, even though the death penalty is not attached to a neglect of the First Day Sabbath, the death penalty attached to breaking the Hebrew Sabbath reinforces not only the benefit of honoring the Sunday Sabbath, *it informs us in its shadow form that death stalks those who neglect the Christian Sabbath (Christ).*

In the NT era, Sabbath regulations were amended and penalties dropped [Colossians 2:16-17]. No penalties were in effect after the resurrection; that is, the legal status changed. The extent of a Sabbath rest was left to the individual conscience, and not civil or religious authorities.

**□ The Christian Sabbath is important, but not all important.**

The Sabbath of Israel was retired. Thus, a Christian state cannot and should not mimic ancient Israel's Saturday's Sabbath. However, a humanistic state that worships productivity and work by alien law is an assault on the Christian order. *When man is reduced to economic man in the utopian mind, man becomes utilitarian in the secular state.*

**□ The Sabbath typified the rest God wants all believers to have in the redemptive work of Christ and salvation by grace.**

The Hebrew Sabbath foreshadowed the true Christian Sabbath [Hebrews 4:9]. The Christian Sabbath not only incorporates the creative rest, but redemptive rest. On the Christian Sabbath, believers celebrate Christ's victory over death, his redemption at the cross, God's new creative work of regeneration to be completed in our physical resurrection, and the need to be holy and separated unto God now in this life.

To neglect the First Day Sabbath is to reject Christ's redemption and to seek salvation by another illegitimate way. To go back under the Jewish shadow is to deny the reality of the Corpus. Just as being circumcised is a fall from grace (Galatians 5:1-6), so Saturday Sabbath-keeping is a departure from the gospel.

**□ So strong was Sunday Sabbath keeping that early church Fathers considered Saturday Sabbath keeping apostasy.**

*"Be not deceived with strange doctrines, nor with old fables, which are unprofitable. For if we still live according to the Jewish law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace... If, therefore, those*



*who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death (which some deny), through which mystery we received faith, and on account of which we suffer in order that we may be found disciples of Jesus Christ our only teacher, how shall we be able to live apart from him for whom even the prophets were looking as their teacher since they were his disciples in the spirit?... let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days of the week. It is absurd to speak of Jesus Christ with the tongue, and to cherish in the mind a Judaism which has now come to an end. for where there is Christianity there cannot be Judaism.... These things I address to you, my beloved, not that I know any of you to be in such a state; but, as less than any of you, I desire to guard you beforehand, that ye fall not upon the hooks of vain doctrine, but that you may rather attain to a full assurance in Christ..." (Ignatius, Epistle to the Magnesians, ch 9. Ante-Nicene Fathers , vol. 1, pg. 62-63.). Emphasis added.*

□ **The goal of the Sabbath was a debt free society as well as a guilt-free society.** It is significant that on the Christians Sabbath (1 Corinthians 16:1- 2), believers took up a collection to pay ministers, church workers, and to help saints laboring for the Lord around the world. Thus, the Christian Sabbath creates life. The Jewish Sabbath meant a cessation of work; the Christian Sabbath spawned good deeds and created hope for the afflicted.

**Some Sabbaths, like the Sabbath Feasts, were seasons of feasting and celebration.** God wants His people at rest, full of joy, and celebrating life. The Christian Sabbath was a day of feasting, a day of celebrating new life in Christ. In fact, in early America fasting was strictly prohibited on the Lord's Day.

**Sabbaths were holy** [Ezekiel. 44:24]. Man was to delight in the sovereignty and will of God. God willed that man might work, be productive, and enjoy freedom. Christ is God's new creation and consequently as a result of our new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), we are created to do good works in conformity with His law (Ephesians 5:10; Romans 13:8ff). Thus, the Christian Sabbath is a day devoted to the development of sanctification: "Be ye holy as I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15-16)

□ **Christians adopted the Sabbath principal and applied it to Sunday [Acts 20:7].**

John called it "*the Lord's Day*" [Revelation 1:10]. Sunday has been a day of rest and reflection for Christians for two thousand years of history. It is sad to see believers today all wrapped up in soccer games, tennis matches, and swimming meets on Sunday morning. The lack of conviction about the Lord's Day is one of

the reasons the nation plunged into humanism. Needed are Christians with convictions who will confront the secularist and refuse to participate in regular Sunday recreational activities.

*Moreover God says to the Jews, 'Your new moons and Sabbaths I cannot endure.' You see how he says, 'The present Sabbaths are not acceptable to me, but the Sabbath which I have made in which, when I have rested from all things, I will make the beginning of the eighth day which is the beginning of another world.' Wherefore we Christians keep the eighth day for joy, on which also Jesus arose from the dead and when he appeared ascended into heaven. (15:8f, The Epistle of Barnabas, 100 AD, Ante- Nicene Fathers , vol. 1, pg. 147).*

*"But Sunday is the day on which we hold our common assembly, because it is the first day of the week and Jesus our saviour on the same day rose from the dead." (First apology of Justin, Ch 68).*

*"We solemnize the day after Saturday in contradistinction to those who call this day their Sabbath" (Tertullian's Apology, Ch 16).*

*"[T]he day of his [Christ's] light . . . was the day of his resurrection from the dead, which they say, as being the one and only truly holy day and the Lord's day, is better than any number of days as we ordinarily understand them, and better than the days set apart by the Mosaic Law for feasts, new moons, and sabbaths, which the Apostle [Paul] teaches are the shadow of days and not days in reality" (Proof of the Gospel 4:16:186).*

Many Messianic communities are practicing a strict Sabbath principal from Friday night to Saturday night. While it does no physical harm, it does call for a spiritual rebuke.

While Saturday Sabbath keeping appears to be innocuous, it is not.

Many messianic teachers apply the ceremonial aspects of God's Law in strict, binding forms—even teaching that their observance of the supposed Sabbath law is superior to Christian's worship on Sunday. Does the term Judaizers ring a bell? These teachers bind other men's consciences to their Judaistic biases [See Romans 14] at the expense of not "holding the head" and His accomplishments on resurrection Sunday [Colossians 2:19].

*Colossians 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days [Jewish/Hebrew Sabbath traditions]:*

**□ The Christian Sabbath not only incorporates the principle of physical rest, but commemorates our redemptive rest by virtue of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.**

Christ is our Sabbath; our Passover; our Redeemer; our Wave Offering; our Pentecost; our Feast of Tabernacles. In Him we celebrate the first fruits of the Kingdom of God and anticipate its unveiling in history.

□ **The early church clearly adopted the Sunday Sabbath in the first century which they called the “First Day Sabbath.”**

The term “week” in Matthew 28:1, Luke 24:1, and Acts 20:7 is the Greek word “*sabbaton*.” So strong was this view the early church considered it apostasy for anyone to keep the Saturday, Jewish Sabbath.

They clearly saw the Jewish Sabbath as a shadow of the Christian Sabbath and refused to go back to it!!! Historically, going back to circumcision, Saturday Sabbath keeping, and a celebration of Jewish festivals was clearly heresy a digression in spiritual maturity, a faithless act, an illicit response to the gospel, a denial of the person and work of Christ!!

*For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace (Galatians 5:4-5).*

- For I testify again to every man that is a Festival Keeper, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.
- For I testify again to every man that is a Saturday Sabbath keeper, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.
- For I testify again to every man that is wearing a yarmulka, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.
- For I testify again to every man that is wearing ribbons of blue, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

*“Christians should not Judaize and should not be idle on the sabbath, but should work on that day; they should, however, particularly reverence the Lord’s day and, if possible, not work on it, because they were Christians”(360 A.D. Council of Laodicea, canon 29).*

*“You have put on Christ, you have become a member of the Lord and been enrolled in the heavenly city, and you still grovel in the Law [of Moses]? How is it possible for you to obtain the kingdom? Listen to Paul’s words, that the observance of the Law overthrows the gospel, and learn, if you will, how this comes to pass, and tremble, and shun this pitfall. Why do you keep the sabbath and fast with the Jews?”*

*(Homilies on Galatians 2:17).*

*“The rite of circumcision was venerable in the Jews’ account, forasmuch as the Law itself gave way thereto, and the sabbath was less esteemed than circumcision. For that circumcision might be performed, the sabbath was broken; but that the sabbath might be kept, circumcision was never broken; and mark, I pray, the dispensation of God. This is found to be even more solemn than the sabbath, as not being omitted at certain times. When then it is done away, much more is the sabbath” (387 Ohn Chrysostom, Homilies on Philippians 10).*

### **A Political Perspective on the Christian Sabbath**

Man, by nature, prefers slavery to freedom; security to liberty; franchises with bonds than duty with risks; self-interest to God’s interests; Sabbath rituals over Sabbath rest.

□ First-Day Sabbath keeping is the cure while its oversight is the disease. Sabbath keeping contains keys to locked doors while its neglect contains bonds and chains.

The goal of history, said Augustine, *is a Sabbath with no evening* [St. Augustine, The City of God, Book XXII, Chapter xxx].

The Promise Land was a foreshadowing of the Kingdom of God, a type of Sabbath [Hebrews 4:9].

□ So important was freedom and rest that God ordained this lesson for man, for sons, for donkeys, for oxen, for maidservants, and for the land, which Israel rented from God.

□ The key to understanding God’s love of freedom is a study of the Sabbath.

To Stalin, there was no God. Under communism, man must work to become his own savior. History informs us that Stalin enslaved more men than any other man in history.

A proper application of the Christian Sabbath will nail the coffin shut on slavery—slavery by humanists who offer of franchises that bind man to socialistic systems.

*To neglect the First Day Sabbath is to turn the day over to the enemy.*

*Man will either be ruled by God and His law or by man and his statutes.*

After deliverance from slavery from the tyrant Pharaoh, God ordained a sabbatical rest for God’s people [Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5:12-15]. Of all the nations of the world, only Israel had a Sabbath; only God’s people were free to rest. All other nations were slaves to work, to taskmasters, to debts, and to

governments. Sabbath keeping contained the weekly duty of contemplating the meaning of freedom. Likewise, the Sabbath is unique to Christianity. The First Day Sabbath is a jubilee—a proclamation of freedom from the bondage of sin and the call of man to seek political freedom.

□ **The purpose of the Sabbath was for God's people to reflect on their enslavement in Egypt and their deliverance from bondage.**

Every seven days, Israel enjoyed their liberty and renewed their commitment to freedom by remembering their enslavement by an alien power, the misery of that servitude, and the cause of their imprisonment. The Sabbath reminded them of the evil of involuntary servitude.

Sabbath reflection remembered God's deliverance, the necessity of His intervention, the cost of that intervention [blood], the power of that redemption, and the purpose of that redemption. Fifty-two weeks a year the Israelite man had to think about political freedom.

□ Likewise, **the principle became a cornerstone of Christianity. First-Day Sabbath keeping is not only release from work, but a day to reflect on freedom.**

Blue laws are the result of early Christian influence in this country. Sunday Sabbath-keeping was an important fabric weaved into the historical blanket of this country. So much so, the canons of freedom thundered from the pulpits of this country prior to the revolutionary war.

**The rise of big government is directly proportional to the neglect of First-Day Sabbath keeping in America.**

Maybe this is the reason why Americans are enslaved through the tax system today. They do not consider the 4th Commandment and its implications.

Consequently, we have more man-made laws and more people in prison than any country in the world. At best, most Americans only think about freedom once a year and *most don't know the difference between freedom and the illusion of freedom.*

□ **God's loves freedom so much, He ordained a Sabbath every week;** a special monthly Sabbath; three festival Sabbaths; a seven year Sabbath for debts; and a year of Jubilee so that man might be free to celebrate and enjoy His freedom under God's Law.

Any dwelling on the evils of the past like the civil rights movement or the Indians of the American west keeps men in bondage and stifles their ability to cope with the future.

□ **Involuntary servitude and debt was forbidden.** Humanists working through a de facto government declared war on God's law-order and on the freedom of

man by designing a debt based system that enslaves a man's labor for life. Capitalists that view people as human resources as means of wealth production is clearly criminal.

Sunday 30th May is the date for UK taxpayers to raise a glass and celebrate Tax Freedom Day, the theoretical point in the year at which we stop working for the government and start working for ourselves\* .

[http://www.tiscali.co.uk/money/features/tax\\_freedom\\_day.html](http://www.tiscali.co.uk/money/features/tax_freedom_day.html)

Under God's laws debts could not last more than six years.

No man had a right to mortgage his future indefinitely and no man or institution has a right to enslave a man perpetually.

God wanted his people free and wealthy and able to lend to other nations.

Because our society, and bankers in particular, have sinned against God by rejecting His Word, Americans find themselves in perpetual debt for houses, cars, and the necessities of life.

*"Christians cannot become slaves voluntarily; they are not to become the slaves of men [1 Corinthians 7:23], nor 'entangled' again with the yoke of bondage' [Galatians 5:1]. The road of pseudo-security, of pseudo-liberation in slavery, socialism, and welfarism, is forbidden to the Christian. The Christian Sabbath is not the slavery of socialism" (Rushdoony, 1973, p. 137).*

Modern humanistic man thinks nothing of putting a man in prison for five, ten, twenty or thirty years of his life. Such human trafficking via the court and prison system in this country is not only against the laws of God, it is exceedingly cruel—a violation of the very principles of the Sabbath.

This author is not suggesting a reinstatement of Hebrews Sabbatical law in any nation, but he is suggesting the principle of the Sunday Sabbath-keeping should be practiced wherever Christ is proclaimed; that men accept the Lordship of Christ and reject enslavement by man-made governments; that freedom be the ambition of every man; that Christians resist the tyranny of their age by States hell-bent on controlling men from the womb to the tomb, from the cradle to the grave.

### **God calls us to freedom.**

*"Resistance to tyranny is service to God" [Thomas Jefferson].*

□ Remembering the Sabbath is resistance to capitalistic tyranny as well as political tyranny.

□ Freedom is despised by the greedy and the oppressive; therefore, Christians must demand the right to observe the Sabbath.

□ Christians must resist the tendency to make Sunday a holiday instead of a holy day.

Parents would do well to insist that sporting events for kids be scheduled for Monday through Saturday, but **not** on Sunday.

□ Just as the Sabbath was a covenant sign to Israel [Exodus 20:10-13], Christians should reverence Sunday and sanctify it. It is, after all, a remembrance of the new covenant in Christ.

In conclusion, the Law is a direct reflection of the character of an eternal God and is binding on all men for all of time. Discontinuity of law centers around temporal, ceremonial enactments. The Torah must be rejected as a mediator and source of justification, but it must become the model of Law for a Christian society and the foundation of civil government. The Christians Sabbath is God's gracious gift for the health of man and for the sanctification of His people. To neglect the First-Day Sabbath is to waste one's soul; to follow the Hebrew Sabbath is clearly apostasy and a rejection of Christ and His accomplishments on the 8th Day Sabbath.

## **Applied Nomos (law)**

God's Law is not only good for Christian men; it is good for all men and all of man's institutions.

Not only must every Christian obey God's Law, so must every lawyer, banker, judge, and politician!

In modern times, believers embrace God's law privately, but politically leaders spurn God's law under the doctrine of separation of church and state. Believers have retreated into a shell of private religion instead of wielding the Sword of the Word against opponents in the amphitheater of public political contests.

Theonomy, meaning "God's Law," insists on the following applications of God's Law publically:

The Bible is the foundation of law, and that the God of the Bible is the Source of law. Not only are individuals accountable to God's law, so are civil rulers. God's Word must become the standard of legislation.

Few things are more derelict than the view that Christians are at liberty to choose their own law (Rushdooney).

Theonomists do not want a "voice at the table," or "equal time." They want godless promoters of pornography, abortionists, and sodomites who shameless display their rude acts rounded up and punished according to God's Word.

The whole idea that Christians must tolerate Sodomites and transvestites in the work place is offensive to the canon of Law. Civil law must have some standard to judge behavior.

That standard will either be the sure Word of God or the capricious, delinquent opinions of men.

1. Legislation must be consistent with the principles in God's law-source. The Christian religion is the key to regenerate men, not law. When God puts his laws into the hearts of men they will love his law and the power to keep it. Change must come from the bottom up; change must come from people who advocate responsible self-government.

The law has limitation and cannot regenerate society.

Christians prefer Christians as their civil servants. Either the godly or the ungodly will serve as our rulers.

Men with a conscience instructed according to God's law are preferred as civil servants. lawyers and judges must receive instruction in nomos theology from the Word of God as part of their training.

2. The commercial nature of judicial corporations must be eliminated; that is, no profit-motive must be allowed in the system.
3. Jail sentences and the commercial nature of the prison systems, for-profit corporations, must be replaced with Biblical punishments: restitution to victims, corporal punishment, and capital punishment. God is just.

What has changed in America is that Americans have become suspicious of Biblical law. But, it is not God's law that needs changing but the American mind about God's law that needs changing.

4. The Department of Education must be dismantled, taken away from the federal government, and returned to the control of parents in local communities.

The state is not the final moral authority nor should the federal government have authority over states or families. The godless State can never be the final arbitrator of matters pertaining to moral law. The family and the church must bear the responsibility for training children.

5. The incorrigible must be punished by the community.
6. Families must pay restitution for irresponsible acts of children, not the state; that is, state subsidies for teen pregnancy, for the education of unwed mothers, alcoholism, and for the recalcitrant must be eliminated



That government purposes be restrained to the limited purpose of the protection of the republic and the punishment of evil doers [1 Peter 2:14].

7. Welfare programs must shift away from the government and return to the church and to the private sector where it belongs.
8. Taxes on personal income must be eliminated.
9. The state must stay within its limited purpose and authority.
10. The State's power to restrict Christian discourse be abandoned.
11. Freedom of speech must be properly defined in order to eliminate pornography as a "protected right." The cursing God, blasphemy against God's law-source, slander, and irresponsible speech must receive appropriate sanctions. The Christian God must be honored.
12. False gods must be exposed.
13. "Money," and the "economic system" must be reformed so that it [A] it has a uniform standard, and [B] that the system benefits responsible families and not "big bankers" and "big government."
14. FRNs must be replaced with a constitutional currency.
15. Treason must be redefined as rebellion against God's law-source; and, not rebellion against the godless actions of a civil government.

**In conclusion**, the believer is set free from legalism, but he is not set free from a duty to obey Christ. The challenge of Law is one of continuity v. discontinuity. This problem can be solved when we realize that God is absolute and because His moral law is a reflection of His character, His moral law is absolute and binding on all men and their institutions.

## 53. The Compromising Church

### Sermon Notes

Addressing a national seminar of Southern Baptist leaders, **George Gallup** said,

*"We find there is very little difference in ethical behavior between churchgoers and those who are not active religiously...The levels of lying, cheating, and stealing are remarkable similar in both groups. Eight out of ten Americans consider themselves Christians, Gallup*

*said, yet only about half of them could identify the person who gave the Sermon on the Mount, and fewer still could recall five of the Ten Commandments. Only two in ten said they would be willing to suffer for their faith" ( Reported by Erwin Lutzer, Pastor to Pastor, p. 76.).*

Gallup is saying that the church is compromised, but it is much worse. Christians think he talking about everybody else, but not them.

In addressing Pharaoh, Moses' command was crystal clear:

*"**Let my people go**, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. . . The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword (Exodus 5:1-3).*

Israel would be set free, but not without a fight. As the plagues of judgment smashed the kingdom of Amenohotep (1450-1426 BC), Pharaoh, desperate to retain control of his slaves (God's people), submitted **four compromises** to Moses.

*You (church deacons) can avoid Satan's snare by rejecting his compromises.*

### **COMPROMISE ONE**

*And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, as he shall command us (Exodus 8:26, 27).*

Pharaoh did not insist Israel worship his gods. He did not forbid them to worship YHWH as long as Israel "stayed in the land." Rather, he explained that there was room for all religions in his kingdom. He was willing to give YHWH a seat in his house of gods and adopt a policy of toleration to YHWH worshipers. Sound familiar?

Pharaoh was a broad minded, liberal individual who saw value in all religions. To Him, all religions were equal. All were good. None were more right than others. He could not, however, understand the extreme demand for separation by Moses. "Why must Israel go three days into the desert?" questioned the mighty monarch. "Sacrifice to your God in the land," Pharaoh offered.

- "In the land," Israel would still be slaves to the government.
- "In the land," Israel would still be subject to governmental laws and statutes.
- "In the land," Israel would still drink from the well of Egyptian culture.

- “In the land” there would be no temple, no priesthood, no altar, and no sacrifice of lambs to YHWH.
- “In the land” YHWH would be one of many in Pharaoh’s pantheon of gods.
- “In the land” Israel could never achieve its purpose to glorify YHWH.
- “In the land” Pharaoh could control the church. The need only to incorporate under the laws of Egypt.

Moses did not accept Pharaoh’s compromise for **two reasons**:

(1) The sacrifices God required, lamb sacrifices, were an abomination to Egyptians and would be censored by executive orders. The religion of YHWH was a bloody religion that required the spilling of blood for redemption; and,

(3) God’s will was clear: Israel was to leave Egypt to worship YHWH. Israel had to be separate from the laws and power of the Egyptian government. Israel had no duty to obey Pharaoh, but they were under command to obey the LORD God and His laws.

Likewise, governments seek to retain their power over men today. The modern State is not against religion. It encourages people to be religious, broad minded, and tolerant of other religions. The State, however, cannot tolerate a people who believe there is one God, one path to God, and one way to worship God.

Application: If we are to serve the living God, we must live a separated life.

*“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you”  
(2Corinthians 6:17).*

God’s people must be distinct and Christ-governed. They must separate from the sins around them. When we look like the world, smell like the world, act like the world, and talk like the world, how can we be effective in leading people to Christ? Vance Havner said it this way,

*“When the Lord’s white sheep become dirty gray, the black sheep feel more comfortable.”*

*When we live in a graveyard, we no longer mourn at funerals.*

A New York family bought a ranch in New Mexico where they intended to raise cattle. Friends visited and asked if the ranch had a name. “Well,” said the new rancher, “I wanted to name it the Bar-J. My wife favored Suzy-Q, one son liked the Flying-W, and the other wanted the Lazy-Y. So we’re calling it the Bar-J-Suzy-Q-Flying-W-Lazy-Y.” “But where are all your cattle?” the friends asked. “None survived the branding.”

Beloved, if we are scared by every liberal autocrat in our culture, we will not survive as instruments of his service.

Now, do not hear what I am not saying. By separation, I do not mean "isolation." We are called out of the worship service that we might be sent back to perform the service of worship. We must take holiness to the hedges, while at the same time having holiness on the edges.

James put it this way,

*"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27)*

### **COMPROMISE TWO**

***And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: intreat for me (Exodus 8:28).***

Pharaoh was ready to lengthen the chain. He consented to Israel's request to worship YHWH as long as they did not go too far away from Egypt. The whole idea of a three journey into the desert was an extreme demand. "If they only went a short distance away, surely they would come back," reasoned Pharaoh.

Likewise, Satan whispers in our ear: Go ahead and worship God. Just don't be fanatical. Don't be extreme. Don't take Christianity too seriously. Is not this why many of us are so ineffective? We have one foot in the church and one foot in the world. We are half baked; half committed; half sanctified. How can we be effective for Christ when we are bi-polar, lukewarm, and try to live under Caesar's statutes and God's law?

To make matters worse, the United States Government gives Americans a long chain, and passive sheeple call it "freedom."

When my family and I heard a lecture about astronomy in Cloudcroft, New Mexico, the astronomer discussed how city lights were skewing their research as they studied distant galaxies with their huge telescopes. The glare from big cities compromises the reception of light from distant stars. Likewise, because we are not separated from the glare of the controlling State, our ability to receive truth has been compromised.

A Haitian pastor illustrated it this way to his congregation: A certain man wanted to sell his house for \$2,000. Another man wanted very badly to buy it, but because he was poor, he couldn't afford the full price. After much bargaining, the owner agreed to sell the house for half the original price with just one stipulation: He would retain ownership of one small nail protruding from just over the door. After several years, the original owner wanted the

house back, but the new owner was unwilling to sell. So the first owner went out, found the carcass of a dead dog, and hung it from the single nail he still owned. Soon the house became unlivable, and the family was forced to sell the house to the owner of the nail. The Haitian pastor's conclusion: "If we leave the Devil with even one small peg in our life, he will return to hang his rotting garbage on it, making it unfit for Christ's habitation" (Dale A. Hays, Leadership, Vol. X, No. 3 (Summer, 1989), p. 35).

"All the water in the world, however hard it tried.  
Could never sink a ship, unless it got inside.  
All the evil in the world, the wickedness of sin,  
Can never sink the soul's craft, unless it gets inside."  
(Paul Lee Tan, #5626)

### **COMPROMISE THREE**

*And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God: but who are they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the LORD. And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the LORD; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence (Exodus 10:8-11).*

*Go worship your God, but leave your families behind.*

What an offer by Pharaoh! With their spiritual affections in the wilderness and their natural affections in Egypt, all would eventually return to Egypt. Pharaoh's strategy was to divide their affections. Women would plead for the men to come back, and of course, they would.

Moses did not take the bait. He knew that God wanted the whole man, the whole heart, and the whole family.

Likewise, the Mastermind behind Pharaoh, seeks to divide the man, to divide the heart, and to divide the family. He will tell us, "Do not force religious upon your children. Let them decide for themselves. Be free, but send your children to government controlled, public schools. Obey your laws, but put government statutes first."

Jesus taught, "No man can serve two masters" [that is, two sovereigns, two governments, two sets of law] (Matthew 6:24).

James stated, "a double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (James 1:8).

The word for “*double minded*” is *dipsuchos* meaning “*two souled*.” Two souled people are ineffective in the service of Christ.

After his victory over Antony at Actium, Augustus Caesar came back to Rome in triumph. Among the huge crowd who greeted him was a man who had a bird that he had taught to say, “Hail, Caesar victorious!” Caesar was impressed and bought the bird for a large sum. Then someone got Caesar aside and whispered to him that the man had another bird that was just as talented. The man was summoned and Caesar asked for a demonstration of what the other bird could do. The man demurred, but Caesar insisted. When the bird was produced it said, “Hail, Antony victorious!”

And, this is the way most Christians live their lives. Inside church walls, they say, “Jesus is Lord;” during the week they live like Caesar [government] is lord.

“When I was a boy, my father, a baker, introduced me to the wonders of song,” tenor Luciano Pavarotti relates. “He urged me to work very hard to develop my voice. Arrigo Pola, a professional tenor in my hometown of Modena, Italy, took me as a pupil. I also enrolled in a teachers college. On graduating, I asked my father, ‘Shall I be a teacher or a singer?’ “‘Luciano,’ my father replied, ‘if you try to sit on two chairs, you will fall between them. For life, you must choose one chair.’ “I chose one. It took seven years of study and frustration before I made my first professional appearance. It took another seven to reach the Metropolitan Opera. And now I think whether it’s laying bricks, writing a book—whatever we choose—we should give ourselves to it. Commitment, that’s the key. Choose one chair.” (Guideposts).

#### **COMPROMISE FOUR**

*And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you. And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the LORD our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God; and we know not with what we must serve the LORD, until we come thither. But the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he would not let them go (Exodus 10:24-25).*

The final compromise of Pharaoh was an attempt to rob God’s people of their ability to serve Him—“leave your flocks behind.” Without their flocks, Israel could not live; and, they could not worship. Moses refused to accept the compromise: “not a hoof shall be left behind.”

This compromise is a double edged sword. This first edge appeals to the “super spiritual” among us. Have you ever heard someone say something like, “You do not need money, or wealth, or houses, or cars. All I need is God!” The truth of

the matter is that we live in a physical world where we need resources to conduct the ministry. To deny the need for health and wealth is a “super spiritual” pitfall—a compromise offered to eager among us.

The other edge of the sword is cuts at our materialistic nature—the reluctant among us—the desire to accumulate wealth at the expense of supporting God’s work. God requires us to give and support his work, not because God needs anything, but because we have a need to be involved in His service and a need to learn to esteem the work of Christ, “so you may learn to revere his name” (Deuteronomy 14:23). American Christians don’t mind dying for Christ, they just don’t want to give up their stuff.

In conclusion, the almighty State doesn’t mind believers practicing a form of Christianity as long as its Christianity does not challenge the power and authority of government. The State offers a long chain. But, if Jesus is Lord, not only is the authority of the State challenged, the Christian is required to serve One Master and His law-order.

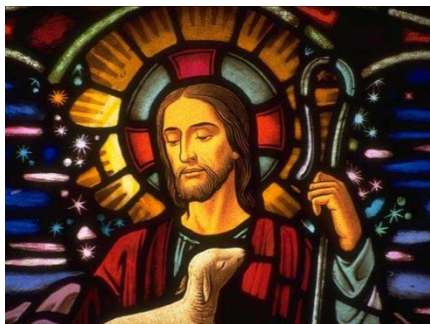
## 54. The Banksters Are Back

### John 2 Sermon Notes

#### *Sweet Jesus Whippin’ the Banksters!*

*John 2:15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables;*

*Revelation 18:21, 23 The great city of Babylon be thrown down . . . for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.*



#### Introduction

When commercial interest gained control of God’s temple, our Sovereign Lord made a scourge of small cords and drove out the money-changers.

With the American church under the spell of IRS, isn’t it time to drive out the Banksters again?

#### Facts About the Passage

**First**, the pronoun “*he*” refers to our one and only Sovereign, the Lord Jesus Christ, Lord of the Sabbath, Master and Commander, King of kings, the only Lawgiver.

The term “*money-changer*” (*kollubistes*) means “bankers” or “Banksters” in the pejorative sense of the term. Because Roman coins had the image of Caesar on them, temple administrators required “offerings” and “purchases” be made with Hebrew shekels. Thus, currency was exchanged – for a price.

**Second**, the term “*tables*” (*trapeza*) was the bench or counter on which banking transactions were conducted. The term *trapeza* is properly translated “bank” in Luke 19:23; that is, the table was the bank. In overthrowing the bench, the Lord extinguished banking activity and banned Babylonian banking practices in the nation.

**Third**, the temple complex was both a civil and religious center. There was no separation of church and state in Israel. The temple was the seat of Moses, the center where the Sanhedrin met to manage national affairs; and, it was also the place of worship, the center of redemption and reconciliation of the people to God. That is, in driving the money changers out of the temple complex, he was driving the Banksters out of the nation – out of civil government as well as church government.

**Fourth**, the Lord Jesus Christ established an absolute principle: “Make not my Father’s House an house of merchandise.”

The Greek word “*merchandise*” is *emporion* from which we get the word emporium. The term refers to “*a center of trade*” or “*center of commerce*” or “*retail store that sells articles.*” The verb “*make*” (*poieite*) is a present, active imperative meaning that good Christian men are to constantly, perpetually resist and fight Merchant Law. The negative demands negation of specific acts; that is, negative law limits government. It imposes a duty on man to deal with a particular evil. Emporia are run by merchants under merchant law. Thus, we conclude that in driving out the Banksters, our Sovereign was abolishing commercial interests and Merchant Law in government as well as the church.

**Fifth**, the Banksters were Jews, not Gentiles. These Jews partook of the forbidden fruit of the poisonous tree, and were barred from the tree of life and the benefits of the Kingdom of God. Most of these Jewish Banksters learned their trade secrets from the University of Babylon, the rabbinical center of Judaism during the Intertestament Period. In driving the Jewish Banksters out of the temple complex, our Master was not being “anti-Semitic.” He dealt with the source of evil. The poisonous root was Talmudic Jews who broke the Tenth Commandment of their One and only Lawgiver (Isaiah 33:22).



**Sixth**, the Lord God condemned the Banksters because they intentionally, maliciously, recklessly violated the Tenth Commandment, "*Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's property . . .*"

This commandment had the effect and force of law; that is, government is responsible to identify the lawbreakers and to punish them. So, what is meant by "covet?" Is God sanctioning "thought police" or the lawful motive of making money? The answer, of course, is "No!"

Covetous is more than desire. Sin arises when evil desire is coupled with subversive plans and clever schemes to unlawfully possess the property of another—such as the "income tax" and "property tax" and "home loans" that shift wealth from the family to the State under color of law. Thus, the Son made a whip and banned the Banksters because their money-changing operation was not a legitimate (something lawful) business, but a financial contrivance deployed to fleece God's flock.

**Seventh**, in Luke 19:46 our Lord referred to the Jewish Banksters as a "*den of thieves.*" He was not addressing petty theft, but constructive, institutional fraud on a grand scale by government Sanhedrin officials. This was a "den of thieves," not a thief's hideout. The Banksters banded together to protect their commercial schemes so they could fleece God's flock while performing religious duties; that is, these Jewish Banksters used the power of the State and the color of law to hide thievery (*trade secrets*).

Eighth, though rudimentary, these Babylonian Jewish Banksters excelled in the art of loan-sharking and money-changing during our Lord's sojourn on earth.

### **The Banksters are back!**

America is totally controlled by the Jewish banking elite known as the International Monetary Cartel. This den of thieves a.k.a. "Occupied Wall Street" has driven America into incalculable debt and the church into slavery to the IRS.

The IRS has turned every church into a government created, government controlled 501 c 3 non-prophet, commercial business corporation that must report all the earnings of the church staff to the government.

The IRS has turned every church treasurer into a Judas — an uncompensated tax collector for the State. Now, the church must pay to play.

Just as the simple serpent in the Garden of Eden grew into a hideous dragon in Revelation (12), Jewish usury grew into a huge, complex, hideous international Monster through the centuries which the apostle John called "*Mystery Babylon*" or the "*Great Harlot.*" Complete with "*sorceries*" (Rev. 18:23), the whole earth comes under the spell of this hideous Banking Magician. These "*sorceries*" (the UCC Code) include a depository of magic tricks: credit card scams, Federal

Reserve Notes, foreclosures mills, electronic funds, interest on nothing, income, wages, junk bonds, toxic securities, derivatives, filter stocks, and other fictitious assets.

These Jewish, serpent Banksters active during our Lord's lifetime morphed into the grotesque Ashkenazi Banking Monster we know today:

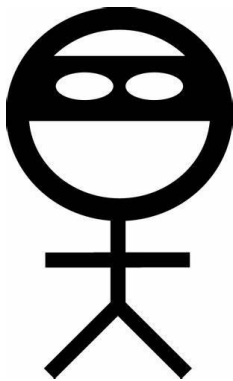
Ben Bernanke, Federal Reserve Bank or FED. Thomas J. Benison of JPMorgan Chase & Company; James J. Hill of Morgan Stanley; Athanassios Diplas of Deutsche Bank; Paul Hamill of UBS; Paul Mitrokostas of Barclays; Andy Hubbard of Credit Suisse; Oliver Frankel of Goldman Sachs; Ali Balali of Bank of America; and Biswarup Chatterjee of Citigroup. "Trilateral Commission Council on Foreign Relations, Club Rome, and the modern Illuminati. The IRS, the collection agency for the International Monetary fund.

Jesus explicit statement referring to His "Father's House" meant the temple complex belonged to God, not to the State, not to the priests, and not to Rome.

With the "church" in bed with Banksters, isn't it about time God's servants made a cat of nine tails to drive out the IRS Thieves?

Not so fast! Jesus whippin' the money-changers for turning His Father's House into a for-profit business was the reason the Banksters crucified Him. And, modern business men (Banksters) in the church will do the same thing to any pastor who seriously seeks to escape the government's control and return "God's House" back to the Father for the purpose of prayer.

In trying to turn your "religious organization" back into an independent House of Prayer, you may find yourself out on the street beggin' for yur supper!



## 55. Thieves in the Church

Some of the biggest thieves in the world are in the church.

Many a pastor has retired with no money in the bank because church elders and deacons refused to provide love gifts sufficient to pay for monthly needs and the needs that occur after retirement.

Figure 36; Public Domain The Bible verse, 1 Corinthians 9:9, on not muzzling the ox (Christian workers) is case law under the Commandment, "Thou shall not steal."

For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned?

Not only is theft happening in Evangelical churches, it is happening in the Roman Catholic Church as the following article reveals:

Stop exploiting nuns for cheap Church labor, Vatican magazine urges



"VATICAN CITY (Reuters) – A Vatican magazine denounced widespread exploitation of nuns for cheap or free labor in the Roman Catholic Church on Thursday, saying the male hierarchy should stop treating them like lowly servants.

The article in the monthly "Women, Church, World", remarkable for an official Vatican publication, described the drudgery of nuns who do work such as cooking, cleaning and waiting on tables for cardinals, bishops and priests.

The article, based on the comments of several unnamed nuns, described how some work in the residences of "men of the Church, waking at dawn to prepare breakfast and going to sleep once dinner is served, the house is in order and the laundry cleaned and ironed".

It said their remuneration was "random and often modest".

Evangelical church boards would do well to repent and find a way to meet the needs of church workers.

Likewise, many so called "pastors" are charlatans that rob their constituents. It is the church that must beware of becoming a victim of a covetous pastor.

We do not seek equal pay, but equal sacrifice.

The pastor must not only negotiate with thieves in the church, he must paddle his boat down a river patrolled by pirates that work for the IRS and liars in government that covet the treasures of churchmen. See the IRS Hoax on SEDM.

One of the problems is a lack of tithing Christians (committed givers). Many Christians don't tithe to the church, some because they are greedy or untaught, others because the present tax system makes it impossible to tithe from a modest gross income. When the federal government takes 30, 40, 50% of man's income before he receives a net paycheck, how can he tithe, pay his bills, and save for his future on 50% of his income? It is not possible.

Moreover, many of those that teach a "tithing rule," are simply not being honest.

For example, I know a churchman who taught tithing and practiced tithing. What he didn't tell his church, was that his father left him three million dollars of inheritance money that totally secured his future.

Likewise, I know of a Baptist pastor who struggled to survive on \$35,000 dollars a year given to him by his church board — a board made up of men who made between \$75,000 and \$150,000 a year. When I asked churchmen about the disparity, one communicated, in so many words, that it was the pastor's choice to choose a non-lucrative profession. Another thought they were paying the pastor too much. Another thought the less pay the man made, the better pastor he would be.

In one Christian group, the church board thought a pastor who received a monthly income from the church wasn't walking by faith . . . so they just gave him token gifts ever so often to remind them he had to trust God and not them. The church drove the poor man into despair.

It is a shame for any church to rob a pastor and then subject him to the social security system after he retires . . . and yet, this is what many church systems do.

The man of God must trust the Lord, but not be naive. It is in the nature of men to use and abuse the Lord's servants. Like Laban cheated Jacob, there are thieves in the "deacon team" that will cheat you. Act Biblically, but prudently to secure your future.

## 56. The Widow's Mite

### Luke 21:1-4

This message was delivered by Pastor Brook Stockton at the request of deacons in the church prior to a fund raising project for a new building. The church was responsive to the Word of God and to the surprise of all, the funds raised were four times higher than anyone calculated. It was not the message that created the miracle, but the work of the Spirit in the good hearts of the people.

#### **Too Much Talk About Money**

This message was delivered by Pastor Brook Stockton at the request of deacons in the church prior to a fund raising project for a new building. The church was responsive to the Word of God and to the surprise of all, the funds raised were four times higher than anyone calculated.

A man in the community said he stopped going to church because preachers talked too much about money.

R.G. Lee responded to the attack:

*“That the three subjects about which Christ spoke most were wealth, hypocrisy, and the kingdom of God; that three of the Ten Commandments deal with money; that sixteen of the thirty-eight parables in the New Testament deal with money and stewardship; that one verse of every six in the gospels deals with stewardship; and that the great question is not: How much do we give? But rather, How much do we keep for ourselves?” (Powell, p. 158).*

The “Widow’s Mite Inspires Givers,” says Baptist Pastor.

The story of the Widow’s Mite is about the virtue of giving. It is an encouragement to some and a rebuke to others.

Its virtue transcends the ages showing us that no one is too poor to give and that no gift is insignificant.

The story takes place in the Women’s Court on the temple site in Jerusalem around 30 AD. Under the porches were located 13 large receptacles about four feet high that were used for receiving offerings. They were called trumpets because they were made of brass and shaped like a trumpet at mouth of the receptacle. Each trumpet represented a worthy cause: gifts to the poor, gifts for offering, gifts for the repair of the temple, etc. They were not used to collect tithes. Tithes were obligatory, but offerings were voluntary gifts given above and beyond the tithe.

There are two marks of a Christian, giving and forgiving. This story is about giving. Christians should learn at least three lessons about giving from the widow’s mite.

### **Jesus Watches**

Jesus watched the worshippers put money into the treasury: men and women, young and old, rich and poor.

A story is told about the famous Baptist preacher, John A. Broadus, a professor of Southern Seminary and of whom Broadman Press and Broadman Hymnal are named. One Sunday, Broadus stepped down from the pulpit and walked down the aisle with the ushers.

While looking at the worshippers put money into the plate he would pick up the money, examine and count it. The congregation was greatly disconcerted.

He is reported to have said, “My dear people, if you take to heart that I have seen your offering today and know just what sacrifices you made and have not

made, remember that your Savior, God's Son, goes about these aisles with every usher. He knows whether or not we abound in His grace" (Powell, p. 160).

### **Jesus Knows**

The trumpets were made of metal and rang out a distinct sound when coins were dropped into the vessels. Some deduce those present could discern the exact denomination of the coins offered by the sound they made. The woman gave two mites, the smallest coin in circulation—just a dink, dink! He knew the woman was a widow. He knew she gave two mites. He knew she gave all that she had and that her purse was empty. He knew who gave that day and how much they gave. The point of the story, however, is not how Jesus knew, but that He knew.

Jesus knows our giving record. He knows the Faithful and the Unfaithful, the Givers and the Takers, the Tithers and the Tippers. What haunting words for some! What encouragement for others!

### **Jesus Rewards**

If I had been there on that day, I would have probably grabbed that old lady's arm and said, "Here now, Granny, do you know what you are doing? You need to take some money out, not put money in!"

Interestingly, our Lord did not rebuke the widow. He would not rob her of the dignity of giving.

Little did this woman know that her gift would be used as a lesson on giving for the pillars of the church throughout the new dispensation.

In a church project, Jesus is not concerned about equal giving. He is concerned about equal sacrifice.

Remember! Jesus watches, Jesus knows, and Jesus Rewards.

## **57. Stewardship**

### **Luke 16:1-15**

This message was delivered by Pastor Brook Stockton at the request of deacons in the church prior to a fund raising project for a new building. The church was responsive to the Word of God and to the surprise of all; the funds raised were four times higher than anyone calculated.

### **1. The Predicament**

A rope of guilt and shame choked the peace out of the heart of the business manager. The rumor that he mismanaged the affairs of his boss was true. His firing was inevitable.

### **2. The Plan**

Scrambling to preserve and secure his future, he planned one last act of dishonesty. Possessing the power of attorney, he arranged a meeting with his master's business partners to settle their accounts. By paying a fraction of the debt incurred, he cancelled their remaining balances on his Master's bill. The debtors left the Steward's presence leaping for joy.

### **3. The Positive Complement**

When the master heard what the unjust steward had done, he marveled at the tenacity of his former manager. By canceling the financial debts of his debtors, the manager indebted the former debtors to his own kindness. At a future time, they would be obligated to help the steward in his time of need. Smart move!

### **4. The Powerful Moral**

From this story, Jesus drew a powerful moral: *"The people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of light"* (Luke 16:8). That is, the people of this world are wiser at using their wealth to preserve their temporal future than are the sons of light at building their eternal future in the kingdom of God. *Non-Christians are better at managing their earthly resources for temporal purposes than Christians are at managing earthly resources for eternal purposes.*

A Jew invited a Baptist friend to attend the synagogue. During the service, the Baptist watched the Jew put in 400 dollars into the collection plate. "Why do you give so much?" asked the Baptist. "Because God commands us to tithe," responded the Jew. The following Sunday the Jew went to church with the Baptist. When the collection plate came around, the Jew noticed the Baptist only put two dollars into the collection plate. Leaning toward his Baptist friend, the Jew utter, "Almost persuaded me to become a Christian."

Once I knew a Baptist  
He had a pious look;  
He had been totally  
immersed  
Except his pocketbook.  
He put a nickel in the plate,

And then with might and main,  
He'd sing, "When we  
asunder part,  
It gives us inward pain.

## **5. The Practical Application**

Jesus applied the story to his audience, "Use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings" (Luke 16:9). By "friends" Jesus was speaking of souls that enter the kingdom of God due to the financial investments that support God's servants who attend gospel proclamation. Use your wealth to win friends and influence people for Christ. Your wealth should be used to help gospel ministries, particularly the church, to seek and to save the lost.

*In this world of give and take, there are not enough people who are willing to give what it takes to win the lost.*

When I was young minister, I gave myself to soul winning. One winter, after 4 months of fruitless evangelism, I became very discouraged. Wanting to quit, I called one of my mentors and told him how I felt.

Marion said, "I'll be down tomorrow." The next day he boarded a plane at his own expense and flew to see me. Over the next three days, he rebuked me, encouraged me, and nursed me back to spiritual health. Several days after Marion returned home at his own expense, I led a man to Christ. Over the next 10 years that man led well over 150 souls to Christ.

I too went on to lead others to our Lord. I often thought what might have happened if Marion had thought more of saving his money than purchasing a plane ticket. His visit was a landmark for me, and his investment reaped dividends in souls won to Christ.

## **PRINCIPLES OF STEWARDSHIP**

Continuing his sermon, Jesus iterated four principles of stewardship:

### **Principle One**

*Jesus said, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much."*

Commendation is deserved, not by the quantity (much) of one's stewardship, but by the quality (the little) of that stewardship. If a manager is faithful "in little," he will be faithful "in much." If he is faithful in particulars, he will be



faithful in the universals. *If a person has integrity he can be trusted with little or much.*

Col. Christopher Columbus Slaughter was a wealthy cattleman, a banker, and a devout Christian. He was a gracious benefactor of Baylor Hospital in Dallas, Texas. Toward the end of his life he revealed a lifelong prayer saying, "I have prayed the Master to endow me with a hand to get and a heart to give." Because C. C. Slaughter had a heart to give, God could afford to put money into his hand.

### **Principle Two**

*Jesus set up another contrast: this time between "worldly wealth" and "true riches."*

Men tend to separate the sacred from the secular. Jesus maligned this dichotomy and set the record straight. If one cannot manage earthly treasures, he cannot manage spiritual treasures (the gospel). If one cannot manage a financial business (what he can see), he cannot manage a spiritual business (what he cannot see). *If a person lacks integrity, he cannot be trusted with little or much. From God's perspective, a trustworthy servant is a channel of the River of Wealth rather than a reservoir.*

Someone has said that one can learn three philosophies of life from the Good Samaritan:

- The philosophy of thieves: "What's thine is mine, I'll take it."
- The philosophy of the Levite: "What's mine is mine, I'll keep it."
- The philosophy of the Samaritan: "What's mine is thine, I'll share it."

### **Principle Three**

*Jesus discussed two other polar concepts: "someone else's property" and "your own property."*

This principle of management informs us of the need to be faithful with what we are given rather than to be occupied with what we lack. A Christian must learn to manage what he has if he expects God to grant him what he does not have. *Faithfulness in managing financial resources promotes one to manage spiritual resources. Failure to become a conduit of financial resources through which money flows disqualifies one for greater privileges.*

John Wesley embodied this principle. He knew the vanity of preaching the gospel from the poorhouse. Amazingly, as his income increased, his necessities of life remained the same. This enabled Wesley to be a great giver as well as a great preacher. Because he was a conduit rather than a reservoir, God entrusted him with wealth. His philosophy was summarized by the following: a) Make all you can; b) Save all you can; and, c) Give all you can.

## **Principle Four**

*Our Lord set up the analogy of two masters: "You cannot serve God and money."*

Jesus is not saying it is wrong to earn money or have a desire to earn money. Rather, he is stating a principle of government. No man can serve two masters at the same time without injuring one or the other. God, not money, must be Lord of life. The believer must master money and not let money be the master of him. *God or money will control the human heart. Money will either be a tool or a master, but it cannot be both.*

Perhaps, Henry Fielding's words state it best: *"Make money your god, and it will plague you like the Devil."*

### **Steps to Becoming a Wise Investor**

In this parable, Jesus declared a truth that the "people of the world" are wiser in their use of money for their causes than are the "sons of light" at using their money for God's causes, i.e., they are generally bad investors (16:8). They either do not invest much in spiritual causes or they choose bad spiritual investments.

□ The first step to becoming a wise investor is by deciding to give on a regular basis. Do you remember the story of little Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)? When Jesus came to his house, he decided to give ½ his possessions to the poor. The first fruit of his salvation was giving. The Old Testament standard was a tithe or 10%.

Wise investors do not make week-to-week decisions on tithing, they make a one-time decision to be a regular Tither.

□ The second step to becoming a wise investor is to decide where to give. Every day I receive what I call "Help, Help" letters in the mail. All these *good* causes want my money. This parable, however, has helped me to remember God has not called me to support good causes, but to support the very best cause with what he has given me – that which produces "friends" or "sons of the kingdom." If we do not discern the best spiritual investments, and we continue to give towards works that yield little for the kingdom of God, then the people of this world will continue to be wiser than the people of light.

Since the church is the "*pillar and foundation of the truth*" (1 Timothy 3:15), the church ought to be the first place you give. Without the church, your personal life and your family life would flounder. If the local church is strong, the family will be strong. If the family is committed to Christ, the family will be committed to the local church. By investing in God's work at a local level, you will be a wise investor. In February 2000, at Forest Meadow Baptist Church,

Gerald Farley, a financial consultant to churches, shared the results of his study:

*In dying churches, the average church member gives about 2.3% of his income to the church. In growing churches, the average church member gives about 6% of his income to the church. In dynamic churches, the average person gives over 10% to the church.*

Secondly, you should consider giving to organizations that are Christ-centered, Bible-based, faith-operated, and mission-minded. Give upward, i.e., give to producers rather than consumers. It's far better to give to a mission board or seminary for example than it would be to give to a "down-and-out" on the street. Do you know why? Try to avoid "fluff" ministries that squeeze you emotionally but have little impact in expanding the kingdom of God.

"If you are not sharing you are not caring, and if you are not giving, you are not living."

How wise are you?

## 58. Baptist Blues

*Ephesians 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints.*



Figure 37: Unsplash

A bombshell investigation by the Houston Chronicle and the San Antonio Express-News found that over the last 20 years, about 380 Southern Baptist church leaders and volunteers have faced credible accusations of sexual misconduct.

Of those, roughly 220 were convicted of sex crimes or received plea deals, in cases involving more than 700 victims in all, the report found.

Many accusers were young men and women, who allegedly experienced everything from exposure to pornography to rape and impregnation at the hands of church members (Fox News 2/10/2019).

See "Abuse of Faith" Houston Chronicle.

Is it time for the Southern Baptist Convention to repent of its pride, Scriptural violations, its marriage to government, and “Big” church politics? Judgment must begin at the House of God.

-----  
Trevor Loudon, “The Southern Baptists, the most conservative major Protestant denomination in the United States, have started down the Marxist road.”  
(Enemies Within the Church)

Trevor Loudon, producer for Enemies Within the Church, recently warned about the dangers of Critical Race Theory in the wake of the Southern Baptist Convention’s “Resolution 9,” in which CRT was legitimized as a helpful “analytical tool.”

Loudon explains that in CRT, “racism is about power, it’s exclusively a white problem, and it’s intrinsic in the current social system.” The solution “to end racism,” is to “change the existing power structures—a polite way of saying revolution. Affirmative action, reparations, and hate speech legislation are all justified by CRT.”

To those familiar with the state of Southern Baptist education, the passage of Resolution 9 came as no surprise. Dr. Walter Strickland, who heads up the Kingdom Diversity Initiative at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, has for years been promoting liberation theology, which informs CRT.

I’ve repeatedly quoted the highly respected evangelist R. G. Lee (1886 – 1978) as saying in 1954 after nearly four decades of ministry “less than 10% of Southern Baptists show any sign of being born again.”

The same year the world-renowned A. W. Tozer said the same of ALL the “conservative” churches. In 1964 Paris Reidhead quoted both, adding that he didn’t believe God would ever use the American church again.

By the ’80’s Ravenhill did not believe the saved in the “good” churches reached even 5%, quoted an evangelist who said 2.5%, and he called the American churches “putrid, effeminate”...“death,” and “The wickedness of America is the church’s gift to the world, and “God left America long ago.”

In the ’80’s both Ravenhill and Wilkerson warned that God’s judgment upon American would come not because of the homosexuals and abortionists but because of the “Christians.”

The most respected spiritual watchmen of the last 100 years said apostasy in the “conservative” churches was over 90% from WWI to 1954, 95% – 97.5% by the ’80’s. What is it now, after another 40 years of fake religion?

About ten years ago Wilkerson’s successor Carter Conlon said “The witness of Jesus Christ is almost extinct in America,” and Richard Owen Roberts said

“Most American churches have not had a move of God in generations and most of those never will again.”

In this hideous situation the obsession of Trevor Loudon et al is obscene:

“The Southern Baptists, the most conservative major Protestant denomination in the United States, have started down the Marxist road.”

## 59. How Pastors Become an Enemy of God



*James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend (philos) of the world is the enemy of God.*

*Definition of adultery: “voluntary . . . intercourse between a married person (under contract) and a person who is not his or her (lawful) spouse.”*

Definition of enemy: “one that is antagonistic to another;” in the context, “a Christian who hostile and opposed to God.”

Big name pastors of mega organizations will deny it, but haven’t they committed adultery against Christ by entering into a commercial 501 c 3 contract with the State?

The reason for this adversarial relationship is that pastors and church boards have (1) abandoned the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, and (2) prostituted themselves to the IRS as one of its religious organizations in order to gain perceived benefits from the pimp State.

### **The Way to Protect the Church**

The Founding Father of this country understood the necessity of religion and its important influence on the people, but they also knew the dangers of a State-Church or a Church-State where the State controlled the Church or the Church controlled the State.

The States gave eighteen (18) powers to the federal government (1791) and not one of them included an ecclesiastical “office of religion” (Article I) or power to incorporate churches under its authority.

The genius of the First Amendment is that it recognized the power of true religion and sought to prevent its adulteration by preventing its subordination to the despotism of the federal government.

*" . . . congress shall make no law regarding the establishment of religion . . . "*

### **The Way to Destroy a Country**

The Founders understood the greatest way to destroy a country is to destroy religion (Biblical truth) and to diminish its influence upon the minds of the people; and,

. . . that the greatest way to destroy religion was not by persecution, but by its subordination to the State.

*" . . . a more certain way is, to tempt her by favors, by the conveniences of life, by hopes of fortune (money and power); not by that which revives, but by that which extinguishes the sense of her duty; not by that which shocks her, but by that which throws her into indifference at the time when other passions actuate the mind, and those which religion inspires are hushed into silence . . . "*

*"(wealth) . . . not by what reminds one of it, but by what makes one forget it; not by what brings indignation, but by what makes men lukewarm, when the other passions act on our souls, and those which religion inspires are silent" (Montesquieu, Spirit of Laws, bk. 12, CHS. 4, 5; BK. 24, CHS. 7, 8; BK. 25, CHS. 9, 10, 12).*

It was the acceptance of State favors in Europe that sucked vitality out of the church and smothered Christians with lukewarm complacency.

Europe is dead and overrun with feminists, secularists, and Muslims because the church has no soldiers of the cross.

The spirit that drove Christians to drive back the Muslims over the Pyrenees or die at the Battle of Tours has long vanished among Europeans.

Martin Luther refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the State-Church in Germany that now bears his name . . . which is now dead in Zionist controlled Germany.

### **The Way of the American Church**

Likewise, the American church as a whole has lost its snap, crackle, and pop.

The country has been overrun with blabber-mouth feminists, militant queers, and the socialist NWO media.

Why? Because the American church went *sub silentio* towards public policy in exchange for government favors via a 501 c 3 franchise.

While many pastors are in denial, haven't American churches sold their birthright of freedom to the State in exchange for a pot of beans?

Haven't church boards deposed the King of kings as Head of the Church and installed Caesar in Washington D.C. as its new sovereign?

"The Internal Revenue Service administers the tax laws written by Congress and has enforcement authority over tax-exempt organizations" (IRS.gov).

When Caesar knocked on the Church door and offered certain benefits the churches, carnal-minded church boards could not resist the golden glitter of the franchise offer.

Rather than consulting the King of kings, the church consulted worldly wise men, "The benefits outweighed the risks," said the pragmatic British BAR attorneys.

*"Do the math like prostitutes," advised the liaryars.*

*"Add the State to your bed, subtract your clothes of righteousness, divide your love between Christ and the state, and multiply your money . . . then pray like hell you don't catch STD (spiritually transmitted diseases)."*

When pastors lay down on the bed of adultery for commercial privileges they birth bastards for the pagan State.

The results are self-evident.

Pastors are gagged. Churchmen are silent about the State dancing with queers, feminists, lesbians, transvestites, traitorous Democrats and Republicans that accept swarms of armies stealing their way across our borders, secularists, communists, Antifa, and globalists seeking to subject American sovereignty to a world government in a brave new world modeled after Sodom and Gomorrah.

Haven't church boards committed treason by deposing Christ as Head of the Church and accepting the IRS as its sovereign?

Aren't pastors called "CEOs" of corporate IRS religious organizations and not "shepherds"? (Look up your church information on Dunn and Bradstreet)

Haven't deacons and elders committed adultery by accepting a government contract and agreeing to be the State's 501 c 3 mistress?

Isn't the church treasurer the secret, uncompensated IRS spy that reports the organizations private financial activities to the IRS?

Hasn't the church become a friend of the world (government) by accepting State franchises? You can't be more friendly than by sharing the same bed and playing hanky panky in the boudoir under the 1023 sheets of the IRS.

Doesn't the local church become a State whore when she prostitutes herself to Mystery Babylon by acts of commerce?

Definition of commerce = "sexual intercourse" (Webster's Dictionary).

Doesn't the American church (SBC, Methodists, et.al 501 c 3s) commit adultery when she forsakes her Lord and fornicates with the State by interring into a 501 c 3 franchise with the IRS?

*"Rebuke your mother, rebuke her, for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband. Let her remove the adulterous look from her face and the unfaithfulness from between her breasts" "Hosea 2:2).*

"Come out and be ye separate" saith the Lord (2 Corinthians 6:17). Don't you know that "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God"?

### **The Way of Restoration**

There is hope . . . but deep sins call for deep repentance . . . something proud CEOs of government approved religious organizations have extreme difficulty doing.

*"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil ((the IRS), and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your (unclean) hands, you sinners (pastors), and purify your hearts, you double-minded (having two masters, Christ and State). Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." - James 4:7-10*

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven . . ." 2 Chronicles 7:14*

God will hear pastors when they pray **if** they turn from "their wicked ways." The wicked way includes, but is not limited to *rejecting the headships of Christ and appointing the IRS as head of your 501 c 3 religious organization.*

## **60. The "Me Too Movement" Goes to Church**

### **BAPTISTS MISDIAGNOSE THE PROBLEM**





Figure 38: Freepik

The “Me Too Movement” visited the Southern Baptist Conventions accusing ministers of dishonoring women and their failure to manage sexual sins against women. See article here

***“#MeToo goes to church: Southern Baptists face a reckoning over treatment of women” June 8, 2018***

Jason K. Allen, author of the Resolution, blames the SBC clergy for LACKING sensitivity toward women who have been victims of sinfulness within the family and church.

“Many women have experienced horrific abuses within the power structures of our Christian world,” Beth Moore, an evangelical teacher, wrote in a letter

It is true women have experienced horrific abuse within the power structures of our Christian world . . . but so have men!

Because Allen’s perspective is feministic, he misdiagnoses the problem.

Why did he use “sinfulness” instead of the word “crime?”

He cites the failure as a deficient view of women.

This is a false premise!

I was an SBC minister and I never met a Baptist minister who failed to honor women or treat them as children of God. Never! If anything, the Baptists have released the moorings on women from Biblical constraints within God’s law-order out of fear of a feminist revolt in the church.

The problem is ***not*** that SBC ministers don’t honor women, ***but that they don’t honor God’s law.***

Because the majority of ministers are antinomian, they tend to see abuses against women as a sin to be forgiven, rather than a crime to be reported.

Likewise, they tend to see abuses ***by*** women against men as tolerable rather than as a violation of God’s law order. Men do not have a monopoly on sin! Women are not always victims. Too often, they are predators who by their motor mouth provoke indignant acts of their husbands.

Seeking to avoid scandals in the church, ministers are prone to turn a blind eye to physical abuse or sweep sexual transgressions under the church carpet. Out of sight, out of mind . . . and, out of the newspapers eager to capitalize on sins within the church community.

Some acts are criminal in nature and not peccadillos that offend the emotion of this “touchy-feely” generation.

Southern Baptist along with other Evangelical churches have an inadequate view of the place of God's law in the church; that is, they have a lilliputian respect for the Biblical law.

Baptists tend to see New Testament commands as suggestions and options rather than law, obligations, and duties. The failure to treat New Testament commands as law and criminal in nature is the product of more than a little evil.

Rather than seeing the criminality of certain negative behaviors that needs to be reported to the police, and a matter of church discipline, SBC pastors interpret crimes as sins that the victim needs to forgive.

When is the last time you have ever heard of an SBC church disciplining one of its members, male or female, for violating God's law (1 Corinthians 5)? SBC churches are all about additions, not subtractions; all about being politically correct, rather than Biblically correct; and, all about being "cool," rather than holy.

Forgiveness is not the first issue that needs to be dealt with. Some people need to go to jail for violating common law and injuring people.

Loving your neighbor means doing your neighbor no harm. Harming a neighbor is a criminal matter that needs to be punished by civil courts as well as a sinful matter that needs to be disciplined by the church's ecclesiastical court.

To be fair, the number one theological issue in Evangelical circles is the failure to develop an adequate theology of law and its place in the church — a failure that stems back to the Reformation. The practice of law is the practical application of Theology. Pastors are notoriously inadequate in the studies of law; and, therefore, lack perspective on right and wrong.

The issue is not a lack of honor for women, but a lack of honor for God's law-order as good for Baptists, all men, and all of man's institutions.

*1 Timothy 1:8 Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully (3rd class conditional),*

*1 John 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.*

## **61. The Spirit Told Me**

*"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit Earsaith unto the churches."  
- Revelation 2:7*

Have you ever had some well-meaning Christian come up to you and trumpet out an assertion, "God told me to tell you . . ."! Or, "the Spirit told me . . ." And, speaking with thundering authority from Mt. Sinai!

I can handle a believer informing me, *"I believe God is leading our church to do such and such or . . . I feel God is leading me . . ."*

But, nothing scares me more than to hear a Christian say, *"God told me to tell you . . ."*

When a Christian says, *"The Spirit told me . . ."* I shudder with bones rattlin' and knees knockin'.

Is there anyone more dangerous on the planet than someone who is hearing voices . . . voices from God?

A person who says the "spirit told me" and then claims to have special knowledge from God on a certain subject is scarier than a visit from the undertaker.

It's one thing to speak to God; it is quite another to have God speak to us! Sane people pray; insane people hear voices.

Such claims need to be seriously examined as these folks appear to be "led away with the diverse impulses" (2 Tim. 3:6; 2 Pet. 3:17).

On the other hand, God does promise to lead believers and that by His Spirit . . . but to hear His voice apart from Scripture is another matter (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18; Ps. 5:8; 31:3; Prov. 3:6).

How do we know if God is speaking to us . . . or not?

### **A Look at the Problem**

Have you ever wondered how two good Bible scholars, both claiming to be led by the Spirit, can come up with two different interpretations of a Bible passage? Both are Christians. Both are students. Both appear to be "Spirit-filled" men, and yet their theological views are miles apart. How can this be if the Spirit is guiding both?

Have you ever felt like God was guiding you to purchase a commodity, and your spouse comes up to you protesting, "I don't believe it is God's will for us to make this purchase"? Wham! Bam! Balloon busted!

Or, have you ever been at a church business meeting where half the congregation wants to raise the missionary budget by 50% and the other half wants to use the funds for a new addition for the children's Sunday school

wing. Both groups believe in Christ. Both ask God to guide. Both are seeking the Spirit's will. Yet, the church is divided. Where is God in this conflict?

Pastor Robert Morris of Gateway Church in Southlake Texas is a little more subtle when he says,

*"Christians can hear God if they 'tune into the right frequency,' because "God wishes to have relationships with every individual." People must value the prospect of "hearing God's voice," he said.  
(The Blaze)*

Tune into the right frequency? Yea! How do you do that? Hummmmm? I've never heard God speak to me . . . duh, uh, I must not be tuned in to the right channel." What channel is that?

What do we do with the not-so-subtle "Christian" who says, "God told me to tell you . . . ."?

Wow! You got my attention!! I'd better listen or I'll go to hell! And, it is even more frightening when their "inner voice from God" is spoken with such dogmatism and certainty. Who wants to oppose God?

Consider this: there is something seriously wrong with a person who says, "God told me . . ." These "touchy-feely" people seriously believe that God is speaking to them directly and personally . . . in a "still small voice !!"

Such people are as trustworthy as a medium at a graveyard séance. Watch out!

The error of these subjective Christians is that they grade that "inner voice" (the Holy Spirit to them) on the same level as the Word of God . . . even more authoritative than the Holy Scripture!

Who needs Scripture if God is speaking to you in the inner man? This is wretched subjectivism—a form of Eastern Mysticism that came to the West in the form of psychology and new age spirituality.

The gospel of Jesus Christ does not take a man inward; it takes a man outside of himself into the accomplishments of Another!

But, there are genuine believers, who hold the Scripture in highest regard; who seek His will; and, who are looking to God to guide them. How can a true objective Christian know if the Spirit is speaking to him?

### **An Illustration**

Sandy Gregory's illustration of the remote employee is worth considering:

Imagine you are hired to open up an office in Anchorage, Alaska. Your new boss gives you a high-tech looking two-way radio, a policy and procedure manual, and tells you that you will receive instructions once you arrive, and off you go. Upon arrival you hear

your boss's voice over the radio, saying, "I will communicate to you through this radio unit. But take note: our competitors, our enemies, also have access to this channel. They will try to impersonate my voice with false messages to thwart our purposes." "Oh no!" you panic, "Then how will I know if it is you or the enemy giving me instructions?"

Your boss's voice comes back over the radio: "Three ways. First, considering the situation, check every message supposedly from me against the policy and procedure manual. Since I wrote it, I'm not likely to ask you to violate it, right? Also, if I am not talking, don't focus in on the noise, pretending that I am. If I am not speaking, let the manual be your guide. Don't let any impersonating voice mislead you, or your own overactive imagination.

Second, since the Manual does not cover every situation, you will have to get to know my voice. I know, this will take time, and so I am not likely to ask you to do anything radical until we both have some low-risk successes under our belts. Remember, I understand the situation perfectly well, so I'll go slow at first. A time will come when I will be able to tell you to do the wildest things, and you will know it is me. In the short-term, you must be trained through low-risk experience.

Third, over time, my overall purpose for your work will begin to come into focus. You will begin to see the grand strategy in the policy and procedure manual, and the overall pattern of my true instructions. When this happens, you'll know instantly if what you hear through your unit is 'of me', just your imagination, or enemy misinformation. False instructions will begin to appear silly to you then. So take heart, and get to work."

After reflecting on this a few moments, you hear your boss's voice again on the radio unit. "Take all of the money from petty cash and give it the next person that walks in, no questions asked." Hmmm . . . ? You look in the policy and procedure manual, and this is specifically forbidden. Besides, you know your boss wouldn't tell you to do something that risky right off. And also there was an certain "twang" to the voice - an appeal to something different within you, and a plan that was not in the long-term interests of the company. So, even though you are on a hostile channel, you are beginning to have hope that you can indeed do this job.

### **A Look At the Solution**

**Q: How do we know if God is speaking to us?**

**□ Know which God you are trying to hear:**

There are many spirits in this world. There is the god of the Hindus, there is the New Age god, the “voice within,” and there is the Christian God, the one, true, infinite, virtuous, triune Spirit, the God of Israel, the God of the Scriptures, and the God of the Lord Jesus Christ. The God of the Bible (YHWH) is separate from His creation and has revealed Himself in history in and through Jesus Christ. He has spoken in history and we have that record in the Word of God. Which of these deities are you seeking to hear? When the Bible commands men to hear God, it means to revere, study, and ponder the Holy Scriptures—not some “inner voice”!!

**□ Pray and expect Christ to lead.**

He has and will. But, what evidences is there that God has spoken audibly since the apostolic era? When a man says that he has heard God speak to him, he probably fell out of his family tree. There is no command in Scripture for Christians to listen to the “Voice Within.”

**But, there are plenty of commands for men to hear God by reading and obeying the Word of God.** *The ambivalence of our spiritual journey is that sane people talk to God, but those who hear God speak to them are insane!* If God Almighty, Father YHWH, is speaking audibly to men today, then we’d better get out pen and paper and write Revelation 22.

**□ Avoid power preachers.**

Many subjective Christians are very religious and speak as if they have a conversation with God every morning over a cup of coffee.

They believe they hear God speaking in that “still small voice” to them. Forget the Scripture! They don’t need it. They have a monopoly on the Spirit. When they talk to you about their religious experience, fire and thunder roar from their canons with booming certainty: “God told me . . . !!!!” Such a blast of authority leaves the simple Christian sitting on his hind quarters singed and stunned. They are in contact with God. You aren’t. And, they want you to know it. Getting on board with these people is like getting in the back seat of a Tijuana taxi driver who says, “Si, Senor, I know da place and I’ll take u dare, cheep!” However, the mature Christian will not be taxied around by these power preachers. Christ has not sent them!

**□ Always consult the Manual.**

YHWH has spoken in history, and Scripture is sufficient! The mature Christian uses the Bible as his compass, his road map, his company manual. He makes sure his inner impulses or inclinations are being regulated by the Word of God.

There is no “inner voice” more authoritative than Scripture!! If the “inner voice” conflicts with Scripture, God’s sheep follows the Scripture.

It is the truth that sets us free, not our feelings about truth.

Is there a greater error than the subjective Christian who behaves like Luke Skywalker who was listening to the ethereal voice of Obi-Wan Kenobi, “Luke, follow your feelings”? Beware of following feelings instead of the Bible. Feelings are wonderful, but never meant to replace truth. The one who desires to hear the Spirit must hear the Word of God (Eph. 5:18; Col. 3:16). The Blessed Man’s “*delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*” (Ps. 1:2).

#### □ **Live by faith.**

God loves freedom and He expects us to exercise our will. Often times, we face a choice between two good options. Both are within his revealed will. For example, a nurse might have two job offers at the same time from two different hospitals. One is near where the nurse lives, but the other pays more. What should the Christian nurse do? God has given the nurse a choice and she has God’s permission to do what is best for her and her family. It’s O.K. to make a choice. It is God’s will that we make a faith decision and trust him for the result.

Those who expect to hear a “voice from heaven” will be greatly disappointed.  
*We walk by faith, not by sight!*

#### □ **Be humble or stumble.**

People who speak with such dogmatism and authority, “God told me to tell you . . .” are blind and arrogant. They seem to want you to regard their word as equivalent with the Bible.

Rather than leading the Christian to the Scriptures, they want you to regard them as some kind of prophet from God.

Rather than advancing Biblical faith, they create fear and doubt.

Rather than assert, “God told me . . .”, wouldn’t it be more accurate to say, “I believe God is leading me to do this . . .” or be honest about the source of an inclination, “I feel that . . .” Speak the truth. Avoid such rigid dogmatism! Stop equating the inner impulse as the voice of God! And, never place that “inner voice” on the same level as Scripture!! Hearing inner voices and having “feelings” for God is closer to Hinduism and the New Age Movement than Christianity.

□ **Accept trials as part of His will.**

When we make a faith choice and the results are positive, we feel good about the “inner voice” and good about God.

When we make a faith choice and the results are negative, we feel bad . . . but only bad, we begin to question God’s leading and His goodness.

Yes, God could have prevented the gloomy consequence of a faith choice. Perhaps, God did guide. Maybe, he didn’t. We don’t know, for sure. “Health and wealth” are seldom the key stones to judge the will of God. Job lost both health and wealth—and, he was smack dab in the middle of God’s will. We walk by faith, not by sight.

The best we can do is to accept difficulties by faith as His training program to perfect our character and our faith. After all, our faith is “more precious than gold.” And, God does pour us from “vessel to vessel” purging out the lees in our lives (Jer. 48:11).

**In conclusion, healthy Christians seek the God of the Bible and place themselves and their feelings under the authority of Scripture.**

Every thought, emotion, and action must bow to the Word of God.

**Mature Christians expect God to lead them,** but they understand that life is filled with ambivalence and choices that demand decisions of faith.

**True children of God approach life humbly and by faith.** They speak accurately, “*I believe God is leading me or speaking to me to do . . .*” They do **not** use such dogmatic phrases as “God told me to do such and such!” Hearing an audible voice is associated with those whose elevator doesn’t go all the way to the top floor, and not with mature Christians.

While we have an inner ear with impulses, and inclinations, and feelings, the mature believer seeks to discern God’s will by referring to God’s Instruction Manual. He does not grant any “inner voice” the same authority of Scripture.

*Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

*Cruci Dum Spiro Fido*



## 62. Avoiding Capture by the “Isms”

### *Sermon Notes on Syncretism*



Figure 39: Unsplash

*Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

When I was a boy, we use to play a game called “Escape and Evasion.” Each side would have a flag and the goal of the war game was to capture the enemy’s flag before they stole your flag or captured you and put you in their prison. The key was to avoid being captured by the opponent’s police force while aggressively trying to steal the opponent’s flag (a symbol of sovereignty).

Did you know that a big horn sheep can see a predator approaching three miles away? Unfortunately, most Christians can’t recognize an enemy three feet away. But, it is much worse than this. Today’s Christian believes that wolves, coyotes, and big horn sheep can live together in peace if we just pass enough legislation to regulate mankind. That is, many Christians have been captured by the predators of this age we call the “isms.”

#### **The Order:**

The first word in Colossians 2:8 is “*Beware*” and it was an order given to sentries who guarded the walls of a city during war. It means, “Keep your eyes open!!”

#### **The Danger:**

Thus, Christians engaged in war must be on guard and put up a defense. The word “*spoil*” means “*to capture*.” Thus, Paul warns Christians to be alert and avoid capture in this war for the hearts and minds of men. There is a danger that Christian soldiers might be indoctrinated in the propaganda war.

#### **Historical Background**

Intellectual Greeks targeted the small church at Colossae wherein clever men employed artifices to enslave the Colossians with a philosophy of law. The word “*tradition*” (*paradosis*) in verse 2:8 refers to man-made laws that competed for the devotion of men (Mt. 15:2).

These “*traditions*” or precepts are the “*rudiments*” of the man; i.e. they are man-made rules designed to control men and utilize them for political ambitions. These Greek philosophies dealt with the nature of evil that had worked their way into the church. Secondly, these errors contained a Jewish element that

called for dietary restrictions and festival observances. These Judaistic traditions and Greek philosophies merged with the gospel to produce a weak, hybrid Christianity that threatened the vitality and purity of the church. To these false teachers, Jesus was one of many religious teachers with no more authority than they. In order to preserve the health of the church, Paul sought to de-couple the gospel from the chains of religious and civil barratry. Thus, we have the antidote to enslavement by law – the pre-eminence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **The Enemy's Weapon**

In an effort to win this war, the enemy will use indoctrination to ensnare believers. Paul warned the church to post guards and to make sure they were not captured in a propaganda war “through philosophy.” The word “philosophy” refers to an intellectual movement that competed for the affections of the people. Good soldiers know the enemy uses lies and deception to mislead advancing armies.

*“All warfare is based on deception,” said Sun Tsu.*

*“The wretched thing about being deceived is that the deceived doesn't know that he is deceived.”(Stockton)*

The means of this deception was “*vain deceit*” or what we would call a “*slick sales pitch*.” The source of these charming “intellectual movements” was germane to man (“*tradition of men*” and “*rudiments of the world*”) and not from God.

The Christians at Colossae were engaged in a war for their hearts and minds. The danger was that the Colossians might believe the enemy's propaganda and syncretize them with their Christian faith weakening the gospel. Several intellectual movements won adherents in the first century.

### **Ancient Intellectual Movements**

**Gnosticism:** Gnosticism was an intellectual movement that attempted to help save the soul by delivering it from the material world. To the Greek, material things were evil and spiritual things were good. Evil was “out there” and “not within us.” Ideas could save man from evil; therefore, education was the great savior of mankind.

**Stoicism:** The Stoic sought to save the soul from destructive emotions or “feelings” that resulted in errors of judgment. The Stoic, therefore, sought to remain calm, deny feelings, and emphasize rational behavior. Thus, the Stoics initiated an intellectual movement that assaulted pleasure with rigorous, conservative rules and regulations about foods, sex, thoughts, and pleasure in general. Stoics tended to deny man's humanity. Bethlehem is the cure for Stoicism as well as Gnosticism.

**Epicureanism:** Epicurus initiated an intellectual movement that taught pain was bad and the pleasure was the greatest good. In one sense, Epicureanism was the opposite of Stoics who denied their humanity. The way to obtain pleasure was to live modestly, free of pain, but to give full expression to desire. The extreme result of this application led to an anthropomorphic, hedonistic man.

**Judaism:** Judaism was a perversion of the Hebrew faith that developed into an intellectual movement among Jews—a movement that rejected Christ and demanded strict adherence to Jewish case law and legal decisions—decisions that nullified the Ten Commandments and the original intent of God’s law. In short, Judaism believed that law could regenerate society. Therefore, Jews believe in absolute law and controlling men by law— not to be confused with the rule of law.

**Merkabah Mysticism:** “*Merkabah*” means “*chariot*” and was related to a pursuit of God through fasting, harsh treatment of the body, and a quest for visions. Merkabah Mysticism developed into a spiritual, transcendental quest for the presence of God through spiritual translation into the heavenly realm – a leap from earthly restraints to heavenly revelation through hallucinatory experiences.

The danger at the time of Paul was that these young Christians might be seduced by these attractive intellectual movements and either forsakes the faith or compromises the gospel by syncretizing them into the Christian faith.

### **Modern Intellectual Movements:**

The “isms” of Paul’s day have evolved into seven headed monsters of our time. Christians must be more diligent “see to it” that no man is taken captive by the intellectual movements of our day. What are the philosophies that are capturing Christians today rendering them ineffective and detached from pure devotion to Christ? Here are a few:

**Papism:** Papism reached its peak in the 14th and 15th century wherein papal authority not only dominated Christendom, but monarchs. As the church became a huge, wealthy corporate conglomerate, authority crystalized in the papacy. The papacy saw itself as God’s vice-regent on earth with authority equal to or greater than Christ and the Bible; that is, papal decrees were preferred above and superior to the Word of God. There was no Bible for the common folk so the illiterate looked to Rome for guidance. Papism is the belief that the pope and church canons have authority above or at least equal to the Scripture. John Wycliffe, John Huss, John Knox, William Tyndale, Martin Luther, and John Calvin confronted absolutions of the Pope, corruption in the papacy, and insisted that Christian understand the Bible as the only authority

for faith and conduct. Thus, the term “Sola Scriptura” became one of the mottos of the Reformation era.

**Jesuitism:** Following the Reformation and the Back to the Bible Movement during the 16th Century was the Counter-Reformation which was centered in the Jesuits. The founder of the Jesuits was Ignatius of Loyola (Ignio) a radical Romanish zealot totally committed to the authority of the papacy. The Jesuits took an oath to defeat Protestantism by whatever means possible including but not limited to deceit, misinformation, assassination, and the poisonous cup. The Jesuits became the black robed assassins for the Catholic Pope. These men are not lambs, but wolves. Ignatius developed a spirituality called “the encounter movement” whereby he encouraged followers to practice retreats and fasting exercises in order to encounter themselves and to seek an experience that would validate God’s presence in their lives – an experience that became the pillar of authority of their spiritual journey – an experience that was superior to the authority of the Word of God. Thus, the Jesuits are not only malicious, they seek inward spirituality; a spiritual experience that becomes the authority for life and conduct.

**Secularism:** Secularism is an intellectual movement that believes religions are contradictory; and therefore, cannot solve the problems of mankind. Secularism declares itself to be free of religious ideology and the fair, reasonable umpire of religious conflicts; that is, only the secular, atheistic man can properly govern society and provide equal protection for all people.

**Humanism:** Humanism is a movement that believes man is the measure of all things; that man is capable of managing his own affairs apart from the supernatural; that man through reason, education, and legislation can save society. Humanism is opposed to theism, and Christianity is its main opponent.

**Pop Psychology:** Pop Psychology is a composite intellectual movement(s) that believes man’s problems are unique to the individual and his experiences; that man’s problems can be resolved by taking archaeological journeys into one’s past to establish blame points for behavior. It is germane to Hinduism where solutions to problems are hidden deep within the inner divine self. Use of term like “self-esteem,” “wounds” and “hurts” and “abuse,” “victim,” and “inner child” reveal the captured mind.

**Statism:** Statism is an intellectual movement that believes government is the highest authority on earth and the solution to all of man’s social problems; that devotion to the State/country is man’s highest calling; that is, government is god and all men are required to pledge allegiance to the state and pay a tithe called their “fair share.” Statism results in churches turning over their sovereignty to the state and actively submitting to all its rules, regulations, and statutes. Worship of the state is often promoted by a confession, “I pledge allegiance . . . “

Statism is perhaps the most cruel of all the isms because it imprisons men for decades who defy its authority. It is cruel because of its commercial schemes to plunder the wealth of the nation through fees and franchises.

**Evolution:** Evolution is a pseudo-scientific intellectual movement that believes mankind is a product of time plus chance and that there are no moral absolutes.

**Feminism:** Feminism is an intellectual movement that believes women have been severely mistreated in the Christian west; that they are equal to or superior to men; and that society would be better off if women would lead the family, business, and politics. So effective has been the propaganda of feminism that society has granted sole power to a woman to decide the life and death of a father's unborn child.

**Naturalism:** This is an intellectual movement called "going green" that worships "Mother Nature" as the earth god, the source of all living, and that nature is the standard for human behavior.

**Pragmatism:** Pragmatism is an intellectual movement that believes man's behavior should be determined by what works; that is, there are no moral absolutes; that the only standard for human behavior is positive results.

**Legalism:** Legalism is a political movement that believes in rule by law; that is, that law can regenerate society; that the passing of more laws can create a human utopia free of vice, corruption, and greed. The main adherents to this religious belief are lawyers, politicians, and legislators.

**Zionism:** This is an intellectual movement that believes the Jews are the people of God who should rule the world; that men should pray for the "peace of Jerusalem" (on earth); that "Israel" becoming a nation in 1948 is a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy; that Christians should give money to the State of Israel because they are favored of God and destined to rule the world.

The main slogan of this movement is promoted under the phrase "Judeo-Christian ethic." Zionism arose late in the 19th Century, and was the cause of the majority if not all the misery of 20th Century.

Zionists are called "Jews," "communists," "socialists," Bolsheviks, liberals, or leftists. Take your pick; they are all the same. It was the Jewish Bolsheviks who viciously murdered, raped, tortured, and crucified 20 million Christians in Russia; Who murdered the Tsar and introduced revolutionary communism in Russia; they were traitors to Germany; the instigators and the cause of WWI; the traitor-communist who boycotted German industrialization; the assassins of German diplomats; the cause of WWII; Gulf War I and Gulf War II and the destruction of Libya.

The Zionist control the Federal Reserve, the banks, the media, television, Hollywood, the porn industry, the car companies, and the shadow government

in the United States. Feminism, liberalism, socialism, abortion, Roe v. Wade, homosexuality, communism, socialism, taxation of the *goy* find their source in the proponents of Jewish Zionism. In fact, it was the Jews in Britain and New York that financed the communist revolution in modern Russia. Their main tool for mastery of the human race is the Holocaust. Though 50 million Indians were destroyed by Americans in our history and 60 million Russians extinguished in Russia, the death of around a million Jews in WWII became the propaganda weapon of Zionists.

The Jews were quick to play the victim and to blame the Nazis, Germany, and the whole world for their casualties in the war. The holocaust is the gagging tool to prevent criticism of radical Jewish political policies not only here in America, but in Palestine.

So powerful has been the propaganda and indoctrination by the Jewish media, that it totally controls the church in America wherein Christians can be found worshipping at the feet of Christ-rejecting, Torah hating Ashkenazi Jewish Zionists. Even Christians call the traitors “God’s chosen people” forgetting that the Scripture calls them “members of the synagogue of Satan” (Rev. 1:9: 2:9). Jesus said they follow their father the Devil. No wonder the apostle said, “Beware of the circumcision.”

**Capitalism:** Capitalism is not all bad, but there is a form of capitalism that believes the rich should rule over the poor; that the amount of money one possess determines a person’s value and worth to society; that one’s importance is determined by accumulating material wealth.

**Constitutionalism:** This is an intellectual movement that believes the Constitution of the United States is an inspired, Christian document and that an out-of-control government can be corrected by devotion to this secular instrument—a.k.a. the highest law in the land.

**Statism:** This is an intellectual movement that believes the state is the source and cause of man’s success; that the state is remedy for evil; that men should be devoted to the state and serve the state. “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country” (President Kennedy). “It Takes a Village to Raise a Family” (Hillary Clinton). “If you are successful, you did not get there by yourself. Somebody else built the roads and bridges (the state)” announced President Obama. Statists call for bigger and better government because and efficient, effective government is the hope of mankind.

**Patriotism:** There is a healthy view of patriotism wherein neighbors protect neighbors, but the unhealthy aspect of patriotism believes that all our problems are related to government, and that the noblest use of one’s energies should be employed to correct abuses so that government can create the utopian society.

**Marxism:** This is another Jewish intellectual movement that believes in the abolition of private property and the redistribution of wealth; that is, that the government has the right to steal a rich man's property under color of law and give it to the poor; that the state should rule man from cradle to grave; that service to the state is man's highest good. It is also called "socialism" or "communism" or "health care."

**Neo-Liberalism:** Liberalism is a seven-headed monsters that morphs itself every day. It is the belief that each man should choose his own values, that there are no absolutes, and that men should practice tolerance toward diversity of values except those who advocate absolutes. The key slogan of liberalism is "Diversity is our strength." Thus, liberals promote giving equal protection to all religions, multiculturalism, adoption of Sharia law, protection of Islam, infanticide, homosexuality, and other destructive human ideologies.

**Syncretism:** Syncretism is an intellectual movement that believes "all truth is God's truth" and that a Christian should incorporate all the truth in the "isms" supra on par with the Word of God. It is opposite of Jesus' teachings: "Sanctify (make them holy) in thy truth: thy Word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). Syncretism is perhaps the most dangerous of all the "isms" because it believes that wolves, coyotes, and big horn sheep" can live together in peace through the rule of law. The whole idea that Christians can happily live side-by-side with child molesters, baby-killers, Sodomites, and Statists is absurd.

### **The Gospel of Christ**

The gospel of Christ teaches that He entered the world and overcame the "isms" by virtue of his death, burial, and resurrection.

The gospel promotes "limited law" and its enforcement on law-breakers, but it makes no claim that society can be regenerated through law.

Men are regenerated by confessing their sins and placing their trust in the living Christ. Grace, not law, is what transforms men. Law, not grace, is what purges evil from society.

### **The Solution:**

The solution to all the "isms" of our age is twofold:

**First**, those who have trusted Christ as the Lord and Savior must "beware" of the "isms" and to resist capture. Know your enemy! Freedom is a high calling and the Christian must do everything in his power to avoid capture by the "isms" that seek his affection and his finances. Resist, resist, resist!! Put up a fight. Hide (Sun Tsu)! Stop submitting to the billions of statutes passed by men called "tradition of men" and "rudiments of the world" (Col. 2:8).

Christians believe in the rule of law (the Golden Rule); i.e., the rule of God's law. But, no Christian should be taken captive by those hell-bent on controlling all mankind by zillions of man-made statutes enforced by a zombie police force who worship the state!!! (See Col. 3:20; Ps. 94:20).

**Second**, the believer needs to realize that he is under a higher authority than the State.

He has been "transferred" out from under the authorities of this age and placed under the authority of Christ who is the Head over all rule and authority (Col. 1:13; 2:1). He is a citizen of kingdom of God (Col. 1:13), and has been made complete in Christ (Col. 2:10).

The term "*complete*" or "*fullness*" is a naval term referring to a ship that has a full crew with supplies for all.

"*In Christ*" the Christian has all that he needs to navigate his way through the sea of "isms" in our time. When a Christian surrenders to the authority of the "Lord Jesus Christ" (Used 81 times in the NT), he is not only "complete," he is a threat to no man. But, he is a threat to all the "isms" that seek his devotion and allegiance. He is not "lawless" because he is "in-lawed" to Christ.

We are involved in war! "Escape and Evasion," is no game. Predators are prowling through the media and the educational system taking prisoners.

A big horn sheep can see an enemy approaching three miles away?

Unfortunately, most Christians are as blind as Hellen Keller and can't see an enemy three feet away from them . . . but the studied Christian man that understands his authority and completeness in Christ can not only evade capture, he can enjoy the fruits of Christ's accomplishments in and through a knowledge of the gospel.

## 63. Pastor, Are you Armed?

### Psalm 149:6

*"Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;"*

Would you feel comfortable going to a temple concert where all the choir members were fully armed ready to kill? This is what it was like going to the temple in ancient Israel.



The liberal media has so brain washed the American people that many Americans think is evil to defend his family against lethal force.

Therefore, let's take a look at the subject of self-defense in Scripture

## A Study Resource on the Biblical Doctrine of Self Defense

Exodus 20:13 Thou shalt not kill.

### Pilgrims Going To Church



Artist

George Henry Boughton

Year

1867

Medium

Oil on canvas

Dimensions

73.7 cm × 132.1 cm (29 in × 52 in)

Location

The Robert L. Stuart Collection, New-York Historical Society (On permanent loan from the New York Public Library), New York City

### Historical Background

George Henry Boughton's (1833-1905) painting *Pilgrims Going to Church* in 1867 was originally called "The Early Puritans of New England Going to Church." Boughton was known as the "painter of New England Puritanism" and here portrayed the Pilgrim Church of men, women and children walking to the meetinghouse on guard in defense of their liberty. Notice the two men on the right, with one alerting the other, and some looking in the direction of a sound or disturbance coming from the woods (Plymouth Rock Foundation).

### Several interesting facts need to stated:

Pilgrim men took their muskets and swords to church. Men sat on the outside of the pew in case they had to rise, grab their guns, and shoot Indians attacking them. Better a lawless savage be killed than a Christian man and his family!

Pastors would preach with a musket next to the pulpit. After the message, the pastor would grab his gun and head to the back of the church – not to shake hands, but to peep out the door to see if there were any wolves or Indians

present; that is, the pastor saw himself as not only pastor, but a manly-defender-shepherd of the flock.

### **The Need for Self-Defense**

The two places we need to feel safe is at home and in the church. But, in recent times antichrist criminals seek to disturb that peace in the church. The AP Press lists these recent violent events in churches:

Aug. 13, 2016: Imam Maulana Alauddin Akonjee and his friend Thara Uddin were fatally shot as they left a New York City mosque. Oscar Morel, 35, was charged with second-degree murder.

Aug. 9, 2016: A shooting during a party at a Jersey City, New Jersey, church left 17-year-old Leander Williams dead and two teenage girls wounded. Daequan Jackson, 18, was charged with murder.

April 24, 2016: Mark Storms fatally shot 27-year-old Robert Braxton III during Sunday services in a suburban Philadelphia church. Storms, 46, argued self-defense, but was sentenced to 10 to 20 years in prison for voluntary manslaughter.

Feb. 28, 2016: Rev. William B. Schooler, 70, was fatally shot by his 68-year-old brother inside an office at St. Peter's Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio, as Sunday services were winding down. Daniel Schooler was found guilty of murder and sentenced to 31 years to life in prison.

June 17, 2015: Nine black worshippers including a pastor were killed by Dylann Roof, a 21-year-old white supremacist, after he prayed with them for nearly an hour. The shooting happened at historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in downtown Charleston, South Carolina. Roof was convicted of federal hate-crime and obstruction-of-religion charges and sentenced to death.

April 13, 2014: Neo-Nazi and former Ku Klux Klan leader Frazier Miller Jr. fatally shot Dr. William Corporon and his 14-year-old grandson Reat Underwood outside an Overland Park, Kansas, Jewish center as they arrived for a community event. He then drove to a Jewish retirement community where he fatally shot Terry LaManno, who was visiting her mother.

March 31, 2013: A 28-year-old man fatally shot his father during Easter services at the Hiawatha Church of God in Christ in Ashtabula, Ohio. Reshad Riddle then made a rambling statement at the pulpit while yelling about God and Allah, still holding his handgun as panicked worshippers fled the church.

Dec. 2, 2012: Elementary school music teacher Gregory Eldred, 52, shot his ex-wife, Darlene Sitler, while she played the organ during a church service at the First United Presbyterian Church in Coudersport, Pennsylvania.

Oct. 24, 2012: A former facilities maintenance employee at World Changers Church International in College Park, Georgia, opened fire, killing church volunteer Greg McDowell, 39, while he was leading a prayer. Police arrested Floyd Palmer, 51, who was found guilty but mentally ill and sentenced to life in prison.

Aug. 5, 2012: Six members of the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin, in Oak Creek, were fatally shot by a white supremacist, Wade Michael Page. Page was shot by a responding officer and later killed himself.

May 9, 2012: Joseph Lewis Jr., 84, was fatally shot while sitting in a car guarding Victory Way Assembly Church of God in Christ in Detroit, Michigan. Two teenagers, 15-year-old Anthony Williams and 18-year-old Alandre Boone, attacked him while a Bible study took place inside. Police suspected robbery was the motive. Both teenagers were tried and convicted as adults for second-degree murder.

May 3, 2012: A homeless man killed himself after fatally shooting a priest and a church secretary at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Ellicott City, Maryland. Police said Douglas Franklin Jones had been turned away from the church food bank about two weeks earlier for visiting every day instead of weekly.

### **What does the Sixth Commandment mean?**

- Both the saving of life and the talking of a life is a duty of man.**
- Self-defense and defending the innocent is a duty of man.**

All of God's commandments are stated in the negative, "Thou shall not . . . ", or has a negative element attached. Moreover, each commandment has an opposite, positive application.

For example, the Seventh Commandment states, "Thou shall not commit adultery." The opposite of adultery is the unwavering commitment of the married couple to one another and their family.

- The fundamental meaning of the Sixth Commandment is thou shall not murder or take a life unjustly.**

The opposite of the Sixth Commandment is thou shall save life . . . the life of the innocent, your family and neighbors, and YOUR OWN LIFE! Killing another

who is trying to take your life unjustly is a just application of this Commandment.

Both the saving of life and the taking of life (justly) is a duty of man. A man may take the life of another without violating the law of murder. There are 18 instances where God ordered men to take life. See Deuteronomy to determine the lawful means of taking a life through self-defense or capital punishment.

This is **not** Jewish law. It is God's law for all men. Jewish law is found in the Talmud – a kind of law that nullified the Commandments of God (Matthew 15).

### **Death penalty in the Old Testament**

*Exodus 21:12 He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death.*

*Numbers 35:16-17 "But if someone strikes and kills another person with a piece of iron, it is murder, and the murderer must be executed. Or if someone with a stone in his hand strikes and kills another person, it is murder, and the murderer must be put to death.*

*Deuteronomy 19:11-12 But if out of hate someone lies in wait, assaults and kills a neighbor, and then flees to one of these cities, the killer shall be sent for by the town elders, be brought back from the city, and be handed over to the avenger of blood to die.*

*Exodus 21:14-17 But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die. And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death. And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death. And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.*

*Deuteronomy 27:24 "Cursed is anyone who kills their neighbor secretly." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!"*

*Numbers 35:30-32 "Anyone who kills a person is to be put to death as a murderer only on the testimony of witnesses. But no one is to be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. "Do not accept a ransom for the life of a murderer, who deserves to die. They are to be put to death. "Do not accept a ransom for anyone who has fled to a city of refuge and so allow them to go back and live on their own land before the death of the high priest.*

*Genesis 9:6 If anyone takes a human life, that person's life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings in his own image.*

*Exodus 22:19 "Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death."*

*Acts 25:9-11 But Festus wanted to do the Jews a favor. So he asked Paul, "Are you willing to go to Jerusalem to be tried there on these charges with me as your judge?" Paul said, "I am standing in the emperor's court where I must be tried. I haven't done anything wrong to the Jews, as you know very well. If I am guilty and have done something wrong for which I deserve the death penalty, I don't reject the idea of dying. But if their accusations are untrue, no one can hand me over to them as a favor. I appeal my case to the emperor!"*

*10. Romans 13:1-4 Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all legitimate authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.*

*1 Peter 2:13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;*

*2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.*

*John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.*

*Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."*

*Revelation 21:27 But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. (List provided by "biblereasons.com/death-penalty).*

Military Code Article III - If I am captured I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and to aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.

Explanation: The misfortune of capture does not lessen the duty of a member of the Armed Forces to continue resisting enemy exploitation by all means available. Contrary to the Geneva Conventions, enemies whom U.S. forces have engaged since 1949 have mistreated prisoners while in captivity.

### **What does the Bible say about self-defense?**

If self-defense is wrong then why does God defend His people?

□ **Self Defense is righteous because God defends His people . . . and, we are to be like our Heavenly Father who is perfect.**

*2 Kings 19:34 – For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake.*

*2 Kings 20:6 - And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake.*

*Psalms 20:1 - (To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.) The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee;*

*Psalms 59:1 - (To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.) Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.*

*Psalms 82:3 - Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.*

*Isaiah 31:5 - As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it.*

*Isaiah 37:35 For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake.*

*Isaiah 38:6 - And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city.*

*Zechariah 9:15 - The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar.*

*Zechariah 12:8 - In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.*

*Judges 10:1 - And after Abimelech there arose to defend Israel Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in mount Ephraim.*

□ **God not only expects men to defend neighbors and friends, but helps those who risk their life to save others.**

- See Abraham's rescue of Lot from five plundering kings in Genesis 14.
- See David's Mighty Men and their bloody accomplishments (2 Samuel 23:8ff).
- See God's blessing on David and his rise to fame based on defending his nation against a belligerent, aggressive Goliath.

*1 Samuel 17:45-47 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.*

God enabled David to kill and behead David. This was self-defense. It was not murder! God approved and gave David the ability to kill the man. This was war. It was his life or the life of Goliath. Better for Goliath to die for his country than David die for his country.

What is war? It is the right to defend your country. It is the power of a nation to execute the death penalty upon those seeking to kill and steal.

□ **Self-defense of one's family is a duty of man.**

It is obligatory and incumbent upon each man to defend not only his life, but the life of his family.

*Exodus 22:1 If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. 2 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him. 3 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have*

*nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.*

This man is not only stealing, he is on private property and stealing private property. The owner can't see the man's intent or whether he is or is not armed. If he kills the thief, God does not accuse the defender of his property (at night) a murderer.

During the day time, the owner can see the man, identify him, and know whether or not he is armed. He can capture the man, accuse him, and let the authorities indict and try the man. He has no authority to kill a thief unless he is armed having an intent to kill.

What if it is daytime and the man is armed? You can kill the man in act of self-defense . . . if necessary and fiercely and with a clear conscience. This is not a carte blanche power, but limited, lawful power to defend life and property with lethal force.

*Deuteronomy 22:23-27 If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her;*

*24 Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.*

*25 But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her shall die:*

*26 But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this matter:*

*27 For he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her.*

**Note the principle:** the woman has a responsibility to defend her virtue in the city against an attacker; the man has a responsibility to defend a woman and her honor in the country. Men have a duty to defend the weak in the city and in the country. If she is molested in the city, authorities are to execute both the woman and the man; if she is molested in the field, only the man is to be put to death . . . either for molesting the woman; and, or failing to defend her. In the city, people have authority to presume the woman consented; in the field, the people have authority to presume the man is guilty of rape.

There is no such thing as "absolute evidence" to remove all doubt. For this reason, western nations have adopted the principle "beyond reasonable doubt" to convict the accused in a criminal case. In a civil case we use the principle



“preponderance of evidence” which is not the same as “beyond reasonable doubt.”

□ **Men must act responsibly and not allow themselves to be placed in a circumstance that may give rise to reasonable accusation; women must be ready, willing, and able to defend themselves against an attacker.**

If there is no evidence of a struggle-crying out, biting, scratching, etc., then a jury can assume consent.

Story 1: On March 27, 1964, Catherine (Kitty) Genovese returned home from her work managing a Queens bar. It was around 3:20 a.m. when she parked her car and walked toward her apartment in the Kew Gardens neighborhood of Queens, New York. She screamed. 38 people heard her, but no one came to rescue her. Were the 38 witnesses actual accomplices to her murder. I believe so.

Story 2: October 23, 2008 The rape happened Wednesday night in a fifth floor apartment of the Clinton Court Apartments. The suspect remained in the apartment for nearly an hour and a half and brutally raped the woman at knifepoint. "All of sudden I hear a woman screaming and she was screaming help, please help us, call 911," the woman said. No one called for help. She walked and stumbled a mile to report the attack.

On another occasion, in the 1100 block of Lombard, says the article, a knife-wielding man followed a 22-year-old woman in the foyer of her apartment building, but fled when she screamed, alerting neighbors. (<https://6abc.com/archive/6467573/>)

Story 3: Woman Gang Raped - Neighbors Hear Screams Don't Bother to call 911. A neighbor, Benite Sangare, told Action News, "She got in the hallway, slammed her door shut and screamed. I didn't pay any attention to it. I thought she fell over something, and that was it. I went to bed.

Why wasn't Benite Sangare alert man and conscious of his duty to rescue a screaming woman? Why didn't he fulfill his duty as a man? Should he have been charged with criminal negligence?

([https://www.democraticunderground.com/discuss/duboard.php?az=view\\_all&address=389x3530530](https://www.democraticunderground.com/discuss/duboard.php?az=view_all&address=389x3530530) ).

Story 4: “Teens Beat Homeless Ohio Man To Death” and no one stops to help (<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/teens-beat-homeless-ohio-man-to-death/>).

Story 5: HORROR ATTACK Woman 'attacked by rapist Fiston Ngoy for 40 minutes on train as passengers filmed attack and didn't call 911' (<https://www.the-sun.com/news/3893794/woman-raped-fiston-ngoy-train-passengers-filmed/>).

□ **God wants all people to be punctilious in defending life and property.**

*Deuteronomy 22:4 - Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again.*

There is no excuse to bypass an animal (cow, sheep, dog) who's life is in danger! God law does not permit a man to hide, ignore, avoid, or blink at trouble!!

*Exodus 23:4 - If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again.*

□ **Positive commands require spiritual energy. God orders men to dutifully care for their neighbors life and his property.**

If we apply the argument from the less to the greater, then we should apply this to self-defense; that is, if God holds us responsible to protect our neighbor's troubled animal, then He expects us to protect not only our neighbor's life, but our own life.

Source: John Weaver's sermon:

<https://www.sermonaudio.com/saplayer/playpopup.asp?SID=912081524365>

## PART TWO



Figure 40:  
Unsplash

□ The fundamental meaning of the Sixth Commandment is thou shall not murder or take a life unjustly.

*The positive side of the Commandment is thou shall protect innocent life.*

□ Defending life from lawless criminals is the duty of men.

□ Capital punishment of a murderer is the duty of man.

The model Scripture holds out to Christians is "to be perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect. God is called the "Lord of Hosts"; that is, He is the Lord of armies and armies are used to protect people.

**First**, since God defends His own house, we have a duty to protect our house and our families.

When Uzziah, the proud presumptuous king, trespassed on temple grounds, the Lord struck king with leprosy.

**Second**, since God defends Jerusalem., we have a duty to defend the church.

*Isaiah 31:5 As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem.*

*Isaiah 37:35 For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.*

**Third**, since God defended the people of Israel, we have a duty to defend our neighbors.

Zechariah 9:15 The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar.

**Fourth**, since God ordered the people to protect land marks, men have a right to defend a nation and its borders.

*Proverbs 22:28 Do not move the ancient boundary Which your fathers have set.*

*Deuteronomy 19:14 "You shall not move your neighbor's boundary mark, which the ancestors have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the Lord your God gives you to possess.*

*Deuteronomy 27:17 'Cursed is he who moves his neighbor's boundary mark.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'*

**Fifth**, God ordered men to defend the life of their neighbor's ox. Using an argument of lesser to greater we reason as follows: If men are to protect their neighbor's animals, how much more should men defend the lives of their friends and neighbors.

**Sixth**, since God ordered the Levites to be armed to defend the holy ground of the temple, we have a duty to defend the church and holy doctrines. Since God ordered the Levites, (priests, singers, poets and student of Holy Writ, and soldiers), to be armed, men have a right even a duty to be armed.

*Psalms 149:6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand;*

### **Lesson from Samson (Judges 13-15):**

God ordained Samson to be a Nazarite from birth; that is, to be a holy man dedicated to the will of God. He gave Samson the duty of killing tyrants in Philistia who had enslaved God's people. Killing was a holy act . . . a duty of this Nazarite.

As a Nazarite, he had a duty to protect his sanctity. When he failed to protect his sanctity, Delilah robbed him of power.

Thus, from Samson's failure we learn that all men have a duty not only to defend their life but their integrity.

## 64. The Number One Need in the Church

*Psalm 42:1 . . . As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.*



Figure 41: Freepik

Thus, the number one need among Christians is a heart that thirsts and pants to know Christ.

A healthy soul is a hungry soul. A loss of appetite for God's Word is a symptom of a spiritual disease.

*"Man shall not live by bread alone," said Jesus.*

A man will become the sum total of his hungers, be careful for what you desire.

Most Christians are hungry for wealth, for power, for dynamic encounters and experiences, but few will take the time to plow through Scripture day after day to know God.

Many spend hours in front of the T.V. watching movies, and only seconds with their Bibles. The icons on the remote control are worn thin, but their Bibles look bran spankin' new.

Don't get me wrong. Christians want something from God.

They want Him as a good luck charm or a genie in a lamp or a benevolent Santa Claus, but few have callouses on their knees and a worn Bible on their desk from seeking the Savior.

How many Christians do you know that carry a Bible with them to work to read it at lunch or during a coffee break?

**Dead people don't eat!**

**Sick people are not hungry!**

I was having a Bible study with a friend over lunch and the owner of the restaurant came up to me. We began talking. She was interested in what we were studying. "The Bible," we replied. I asked the owner how often she saw people reading or studying the Bible in her diner. She said, "Never!" And, it was 2:00 on Sunday afternoon and the diner was filled with Christian people who had just come from a church service . . . and not one had a Bible in hand. Not one!

"The church is sick!" I thought to myself.

Diseased Christians can go week after week and never read a text from the Holy Scripture. But, healthy Christians burn with hunger to know Christ better.

If we are not wearing out your Bible in search of God and His ways, we are not following Christ!

If we don't have worn pages in our Bibles, we could be spiritually sick!

God's perfect man declared, even in the midst of failed health said, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food," (Job 23:12).

Listen to Christians after church. What are they talking about? Are they discussing the sermon, or are they talking about business, food, sports, kids, school, work, weather, trucks, and the latest hit movie . . .?

But, what a blessed church that has Christians with Bible in hands discussing a passage of Scripture with one another after a service.

The need of the hour is hungry Christian MEN panting to know Christ better.

Let's be one of them.

## 65. The Cost of Soul-Winning

Someone has said the way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time. The same is true in seeking to win the world for Christ. It begins with one person.

My challenge is **not** to try to reach the world, but to REACH ONE. Each one REACH ONE.

If Each One will REACH ONE, we will reap in the harvest. But, reaching one can be expensive. It will cost to win the lost. You should be willing to pay whatever it cost to REACH ONE because Jesus splurged His resources to REACH ONE.

*“ . . . there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit . . .” (Mark 5:1)*

What we have here is a salvic feast, a banquet table of redemptive delights. You can appreciate the delicious fruit by sinking your teeth into the juicy pomegranate of redemptive efforts to REACH ONE man for Christ.

### Scene One

#### **The Terrifying Boat Ride**



Figure 42: Freepik

After a long, busy day, Jesus said to his tired disciple-evangelists, “Let us cross over to the other side of the sea” (Mark 4:35). What a night! Snow glazed winds from Mt. Hermon licked across the Sea of Galilee chilling the night air. Sea spray bit the flesh chapping the skin and leeching courage out of anxious hearts. Like a seesaw, powerful waves tossed the toy ship up and down terrifying the crew during the horrendous storm. Thoughts that the giant sea was going to swallow them into its gut gorged the mind. Is this the currency evangelists have to spend in order to REACH ONE man for Jesus?

### Scene Two

#### **Meeting the Demoniac**

Arriving safely on the other side of the Sea near Gergesa, the exhausted evangelists were met by a maniac. His appearance tasted like rancid meat. From his calloused bruised feet to the top of his matted hair, he was a freekin’ mystery.

His olive-black eyes set in cave-dark sockets and his raw nakedness shocked the pure mind. He lived in a mysterious graveyard seeping with death, and paraded around at night scrounging for food and molesting the villagers. He lacerated his arms and legs, and made howling sounds during the darkness of the night. His haunts and howls scared the goodness out of men. Armed with chains, acidic personalities ventured out to try and capture the crazy man. All attempts to control the demented sank into the sea of failure like stone weight. The maniac possessed supernatural strength and broke the chains. He was not the kind of man most of us would put on our “Ten Most Wanted List” of people to reach for Christ. But, the man was on Jesus’ list.

The naked man whose skin had been bronzed by the cruel Sun raced toward the exhausted evangelists growling out commands to the Son of God to spare him (the evil spirit) the bitterness of torment. His raspy voice and gnarled flesh packed salt into the fear-shredded hearts of the sailors.

It was for this moment that Jesus crossed the Sea. With a mighty display of salvic power, Jesus woofed out orders to the putrefied spirits. Peeled like an onion, the foul odors of rotting demons departed from the black core of the man. The sweet fragrance of salvation entered the soul of the man and filled his emptiness. In a moment, the regenerative powers of the kingdom of God were at work in this man's heart. As the grains of goodness were planted in his soul, the gall of bitterness disappeared. Contentment filled his inner core. How sweet are the fruits of salvation.

### **Scene Three**

#### **Pig Stampede**

Awakened by loud vibrations, the disciples snapped to attention like Roman soldiers. With eyes as large as ostrich eggs and nasal passages pulsing with anticipation, the mesmerized evangelists were hypnotized by the oinking, screeching pigs inexplicably stampeding down ragged ravines toward threatening sea cliffs. Clouds of dust swirled high in the morning air. Breath soured. The earth rumbled. Grunting sounds bellowed like foghorns from a herd of swine flesh. The slosh and slop of plunging swine into the glassy sea fermented in the gut. Baked in the oven of wonder, the sizzling scene branded the minds of the evangelists forever. As the dust settled, an eerie silence migrated to the disturbed ridges. The disciples stood silent gazing upon thousands of swine carcasses floating on the lake.

Turning their attention from the swine stampede, the twelve evangelists attended former demoniac who was sitting calm and sane. Warm hands touched his cold shoulders. A used cloak was tenderly placed over the man to cover his masculine nakedness. Emerged from his stupor, a thankful smile appeared on the parched lips of this new creation. His body hummed with joy, and the peace that passes all understanding settled in like the morning dew to refresh the souls of all.

Salvation is a deep mystery that turns lives right side up. Did you know that the word evil spelled backward is the word live? When Jesus converts the soul, He cast out evil and makes men live. Did you know that stressed spelled backwards is desserts? Jesus invited a starving man to his kingdom banquet and treated him to his salvic desserts. God provides a banquet of delights for those who trust him.

### **Scene Four**

#### **Rejection by the Villagers**

A short time later, the disciples heard more grunts and groans. Looking up they saw something more alarming than the demoniac, rotten fruit – a crowd of disgruntled investigators. When the locals saw the former demoniac sitting in

his right mind, one might think that juices of gratitude would be dripping from their lips. But, the crowd had been sucking on sour grapes and acidity coated their tongues. With foul breath in their mouths, the locals requested Jesus vacate their country. Why would anybody ever ask sweet Jesus to leave? It appears that the dust of insanity that once choked the demoniac now clogged the throats of the locals.

Interestingly, sweet Jesus honored their fear-driven request, but not before leaving them a pastor. The former demoniac having tasted the delicious fruits of redemption asked Jesus if he could join His band of disciples. Jesus said, "No," to the man's lamb-like prayer. Rather, He assigned this new sheep to a mission field. The people he once terrified became his congregation. Years later during Jesus' Perea Ministry, Jesus came back through this region and many in the former madman's congregation received the Lord.

## The Cost of REACHING ONE



Figure 43: Upsplash, Michelle Henderson

**Think of the cost of REACHING ONE!**

**Jesus spent the strength of the disciples.**

The disciple-evangelists endured an all-night storm, the terrifying assault by the demon possessed man, the harrowing experience of 2000 stampeding pigs racing to their death, and the rejection of the local villagers. Jesus exhausted the disciples' bodies, terrified their minds, and shredded their emotions to REACH

ONE man with salvation. Will it cost us any less to REACH ONE man for Christ?

Jesus spent many man-hours seeking to REACH ONE.

Thirteen men crossed the Sea. Thirteen men ministered to one demoniac and then left to return across the Sea. I estimate that the whole mission trip took about 15 to 20 hours. If we say it took 18 hours from 13 men, then a total of 234 man-hours were invested to REACH ONE man for Christ. If each man-hour was worth twenty dollars an hour, then Jesus spent four thousand, six hundred and forty dollars of time to REACH ONE man in need of him. And, this was one day's mission budget!

**Jesus spent capital to REACH ONE.**

Two thousand pigs were drowned in the process of deliverance. If the average cost of a pig was \$200 dollars, then Jesus spent over \$400,000 dollars to REACH ONE. But, this was more than a herd of pigs. This was a swine business. Pigs produce other little pigs. A good sow will produce eight to 15 little baby pigs.



This was BIG BUSINESS in those days, and this size of pig farm would be worth at least a million dollars in today's currency. Think of it. Jesus spent over a million dollars to REACH ONE man. Will it cost us any less to REACH ONE man?

Is one person really worth all the emotional energy, man-hours, and money it cost to REACH ONE for the kingdom of God? Jesus thought so.

What are you spending to REACH ONE man for Christ? What is your church willing to spend to REACH ONE person with the good news of the gospel.

No, we are not talking about spending money for the latest Baptist attendance program.

## 66. The Praying Church



Figure 44: Upsplash

When a rock rolls down a hill it will eventually come to rest. When an automobile runs out of gas, it will eventually stop along the side of the road.

In physics, we call this the law of entropy, i.e., the available amount of energy in a closed system diminishes. All systems are moving toward a state of rest.

As a church, we are always fighting rest, inertia, loss of energy. The tendency of every Christian movement is toward entropy. Ours is no different. At times we feel tired, sluggish, and sooo busy. What do we do when the second law of thermodynamics dominates our lives?

There was a church like this in the Bible—the Jerusalem church (Acts 12). They were at least 12,000 strong at one time in their history, but Saul's persecution scattered this church to the four winds. Local sentiments cast a shadow of negativity over the Christians who remained in the area, and they became very unpopular in the media. Quite a change from the esteem they enjoyed earlier in their history (Acts 5:13). The waves of economic ruin and loss of jobs thrashed this boat load of Christians against the rocks leaving some families in deep water and financial shambles. Poverty set in like a New England fog to chill the

bones and sap energy from souls of those struggling for existence. It was a terrible time for these people.

### **Herod Agrippa**

Herod Agrippa, the playboy wonder, was king at this time. He began a campaign of persecution to destroy the church in Jerusalem. Born in 10 B.C., Herod was the son of Aristobulus and the grandson of infamous Herod the Great. Aristobulus was killed by his father in 10 B.C. This caused Caesar Augustus to say he would rather be Herod's pig than one of Herod's sons. Agrippa's grandmother was Mariame, a Hasmonean princess. Herod Agrippa was educated in Rome with his boyhood friends, Caligula and Gaius (later Roman Emperors). Agrippa lived a life of luxury – a sort of playboy life in decadent Rome. At one time, he was arrested by Tiberias for criticizing the Emperor. When Tiberias died in 37 A.D., Agrippa's fortunes improved. Caligula or Gaius appointed Agrippa over northeast Palestine, the region of Galilee and Perea, and gave him the title "king" which is why he is known as King Herod Agrippa (41-44 BC).

### **The Death of James**

Like his grandfather, Agrippa was half-Jew and half-Idumean. A slick politician, Agrippa was loyal to Rome, but he practiced a form of Judaism in order to pacify the Jews. Learning that the leading Jews were disgruntled with the sect of Christianity because of their extension into the Gentile community, Herod Agrippa had James, the brother of John, arrested, imprisoned, and put to death. It is here that our story begins: "Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church." - Acts 12:1

James was the first apostle among the twelve to be put to death. Notice the ease in which Agrippa is able to find James to arrest him and to behead the apostle. There appears to be no resistance, no struggle, no protest. The affair was a simple, quick, unjust execution of a good man by an evil king.

The church will always experience resistance to its message. One of Satan's strategies to cripple God's work is to target church leaders for destruction:

*"Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered"* (Zechariah 13:7).

### **The Arrest of Peter**

When Herod took a poll and learned that he gained points for executing James, he followed suit and arrested Peter, the leading pastor of the sect. The arrest took place during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, an eight-day feast at the time of Passover. Apparently, Peter was kept in prison during this time. Agrippa planned to conduct a mock trial at the conclusion of the feast, trump up charges against Peter for breaking some statutory law, condemn him, and then put him

to death. Herod knew this would please the leaders of the Jews and that his popularity would rise in the polls.

To assure results, Agrippa placed Peter in prison, possibly Fortress Antonio. Peter was guarded by four squads of soldiers, that is sixteen trained Roman commandos. Two were chained to Peter, one guarded Peter's cell door, and the other guarded the main prison gate. Rotating shifts, four soldiers would stand guard three hours at a time, twice a day.

Peter knew he was marked for martyrdom. The Lord predicted his death (John 21). Imagine Peter's thoughts while he was chained between these two soldiers contemplating his death. He must have thought, "This is it!" Things seemed so final.

### **The Church Asleep**

Notice that when James was arrested, the church did not protest. They did not march in the streets. They did not send a letter to remonstrate against the arrest. They did not pray! No prayer, no petitions, no pleadings went up to the throne of God on behalf of James. Perhaps, they were so wrapped up in personal problems they did not pray. Maybe they were spiritually asleep and lethargic, or possibly they did not discern the animus residing within the heart of Herod Agrippa. Whatever reason, they did not pray.

We learn a truth: *People are often oblivious to the struggles of their leaders.*

Who would have ever guessed that Spurgeon suffered from depression because of the criticism of jealous contemporaries? Who among the saints knew the fears that shredded the soul of Adoniram Judson. Leaders usually do not hang out their dirty laundry in public. We need to understand that leaders are not immune to the struggles of humanity. Some are eaten up with the fear of rejection, some with the fear of criticism, and some with the fear of poverty. We need to pray much for our leaders.

### **The Praying Church**

Notice the difference between the arraignment of Peter from James: "So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying" (12:5).

### **The Powerful Results of Prayer**

**Powerful Deliverance:** On the eve of Peter's execution, an angel came to Peter's aid. While the soldiers were in a deep sleep, the angel unlocked Peter's chains, ordered him to get dressed, and the two of them busted out of prison.

Scurrying through the streets, Peter arrived at the house of Mary, the mother of John, and reported the good news. Shortly, thereafter, Peter went underground.

**Powerful Joy:** When Peter arrived at Mary's house and knocked at the door, Rhoda was "overjoyed." Leaving Peter outside, she raced to tell the praying

saints the good news. Prayer results in joy. Some of us can testify that we have come discouraged to many a prayer meeting, but whoever leaves in the same state?

**Powerful Judgment:** When Herod heard of Peter's escape, he investigated the incident and ordered the guards to be executed.

Later, Herod attended a meeting in Caesarea to entertain a petition by Blastus from Tyre and Sidon. Apparently, the people of Tyre and Sidon offended Herod. Dependent upon the grain crop from Judea, the people of Tyre and Sidon needed to make amends and appealed to Herod at Caesarea through their agent Blastus. At the forum, Herod wore his silver robe, acted pompously, and flaunted his royal power in an arrogant, boisterous manner. When people attributed deity to Agrippa, he lapped up the praise like a starving dog. But, his arrogance ascended to heaven like odors from an open sewer, and an angel of judgment was dispatched to end his life. Herod died suddenly. Josephus tells us that he was seized in the stomach with a severe pain and died within days.

**Powerful Evangelism:** The Scripture tells us that "the Word of God continued to increase and spread" (12:24). This is God's way of telling us that the Christians began to proclaim the gospel and that many more people placed their faith in Christ. The Greek verbs "increase" and "spread" are imperfect verbs indicating that this harvest was not a spurious, one-time event, but a continuous on-going revival in the region.

### **How to Pray Powerfully**

We must ask the question, "How can we pray and see the mighty power of God revealed?"

**Pray rebelliously:** Prayer is ultimately an insurrection against the status quo. Prayer happens because people refuse to accept the world as it is. Prayer is an organized rebellion against evil, meanness, injustice, immorality, sin, transgression, and wickedness of the age.

**Pray earnestly:** The word "earnest" (h=n evktenw/j) is an adverb describing the kind of prayer that was offered. The word "earnest" is translated "deeply" (NIV in 1 Peter 1:22). The word is used to describe the Lord's agony and blood sweat in Luke 22:44. In Jonah's discourse to the wicked city of Ninevah, he advised them to put on sackcloth and pray "mightily to God." The word "mighty" (LXX) is our word "earnest."

**Pray continually:** The Greek verb for prayer is a present participle and it communicates that this church prayed continuously during Peter's arraignment. Immediately, when the church heard that Peter was imprisoned, they knew what to do. They fell on their knees and prayed for Peter. They did not stop praying until Peter was out of jail.

God is not calling us to pray 24 hours a day for the rest of our lives. But, I believe there will be seasons when we need to be on our knees for times of sustained prayer.

**Pray publicly:** By praying continuously, we do not mean that every individual prayed 24 hours a day for eight days, but that the church organized itself in a way that prayer was going up continuously because of the crisis. This was public prayer, group prayer, and church prayer. It was the power of collective prayer that resulted in Peter's release, and it was the lack of public prayer that resulted in the death of James.

Interestingly, no apostle was present at these prayer meetings. Individual church members initiated the prayer. Why is it that church members tend to wait till leaders in the church organize prayer meetings? I want to go on record to say that you never need my permission to start a prayer meeting.

**Pray specifically:** Note that this church prayed earnestly "for him" (Acts 12:5). They did not simply pray that God would bless the world, but they that Peter would be delivered from certain death. Their prayer was specific; that is, they argued with particularity Peter's plight before Him Who can reverse the inevitable. When praying, we need to narrow our focus. Avoid shotgun prayer. Send a silver bullet.

**Pray sacrificially:** Apparently, Peter was delivered in the middle of the night. People were losing sleep during this time of intercession. This kind of prayer is costly, but it purchased Peter's deliverance.

**Pray weakly:** When Rhoda sprinted to tell the rest of the saints that Peter was at the door, they thought she was out of her mind (12:15). All were shocked by Peter's arrival.

We kind of laugh at this incident, but that is exactly how we would have responded. These are our kind of people. God allowed us to see the "humanness" of these people so we might know that powerful praying does not come from perfect people.

You see, our prayers are a mixture of faith and unbelief, of hope and despair, of heaven and of earth. I wish it were otherwise. But it isn't. We pray weakly, that is, we pray to an Almighty God as frail saints struggling to believe God for the impossible. Instead of pretending to be pit warriors for God, I think it is best to argue our weakness. David confessed, "I am poor and needy, come quickly to me, O God" (Psalm 70:5). In other words, don't let the consciousness of your humanity keep you from joining the saints at a prayer meeting.

**In conclusion,** we have examined an historical crisis that threatened the prosperity of the gospel. If Satan can destroy leaders, he can destroy a church.

These saints were not perfect people, but they responded properly to a local crisis and reversed the course of history.

As a church, we will constantly be battling impotence, tiredness, weakness, and fruitlessness. Vision will grow dim. Programs will die. Laborers will quit. Energy will wind down. How do we overcome the law of entropy? The solution is to rebel and to be a praying church. Prayer is not part of our work; it is our work. We can do much for God after we have prayed, but we cannot do much for God until we have prayed.

Let us be a praying church!

# References

## Holy Scripture

|                            |               |                        |         |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------|
| 1 Corinthians 10:31 .....  | 31            | Isaiah 30:15 .....     | 149     |
| 1 Corinthians 11 .....     | passim        | James 4:4 .....        | 223     |
| 1 Corinthians 14:23 .....  | 57            | Jeremiah 5:1 .....     | 163     |
| 1 Corinthians 16:2 .....   | 185           | John 2 .....           | 35, 209 |
| 1 Corinthians 5 .....      | 107           | John 2:17 .....        | 35      |
| 1 Corinthians 6 .....      | 113           | Judges 4-5 .....       | 172     |
| 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 ..... | 179           | Leviticus 13 .....     | 103     |
| 1 Corinthians 9:9 .....    | 212           | Leviticus 19:2 .....   | 182     |
| 1 Peter 4:17 .....         | 117, 119, 128 | Leviticus 19:32 .....  | 153     |
| 1 Samuel 15:3 .....        | 24            | Luke 12:51 .....       | 148     |
| 1 Timothy 3:15 .....       | 62            | Luke 16:1-15 .....     | 216     |
| 1 Timothy 3:16 .....       | 73            | Malachi 1:11 .....     | 37      |
| 1 Timothy 4:1 .....        | 34, 175       | Malachi 3:6 .....      | 24      |
| 2 Thessalonians 2:3 .....  | 33            | Mark 4:35 .....        | 256     |
| Acts 12 .....              | 259           | Matthew 28:19-20 ..... | 78      |
| Acts 13:10 .....           | 180           | Matthew 3:13-15 .....  | 78      |
| Acts 20:7 .....            | 185           | Matthew 5:13 .....     | 138     |
| Colossians 2:8 .....       | 235           | Proverbs 15:1 .....    | 140     |
| Deuteronomy 12:8 .....     | 135           | Proverbs 16:31 .....   | 153     |
| Deuteronomy 22:5 .....     | 166           | Psalms 149:6 .....     | 242     |
| Ephesians 5:3 .....        | 221           | Psalms 19:7 .....      | 43      |
| Exodus 20:2-3 .....        | 51, 160       | Psalms 42:1 .....      | 254     |
| Exodus 5:1-3 .....         | 204           | Revelation 2:7 .....   | 229     |
| Genesis 14:18 .....        | 75            | Titus 2:14 .....       | 158     |
| Habakkuk 2:20 .....        | 149           | Zechariah 3:7 .....    | 24      |
|                            |               | Zechariah 4 .....      | 52      |
|                            |               | Zechariah 8:17 .....   | 181     |

# Bibliography

Francis A. Schaeffer, How Should We then Live, Fleming H. Revell Co., New Jersey, (1971).

Gary DeMar, You've Heard It Said, (1991), Wolgeuth & Hyatt Publishers, Brentwood, Tennessee.

George Eldon Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, (1974), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.

John R. Rushdoony, Institutes of Biblical Law (1973).

John Weaver Sermons, sermonaudio.com.

Peter Kershaw, In Caesar's Grip, (2000), Heal Our Land Ministries, Branson Missouri.

Sanders, J.O. (1971). The Incomparable Christ. Moody Press, Chicago.

Stockton, B. (2022). The Five Pillars of the Gladiator Gospel 2.0. Family Guardian: <https://nikeinsights.fanguardian.org/forums/topic/five-pillars-of-the-gladiator-gospel-e-book/>

Stockton, the Crisis of Church Incorporation, Form #13.017, NikeInsights.fanguardian.org/publications.

Stockton, The Case for Headcovering and the Restoration of Law in the Church, NikeInsights.fanguardian.org/publications

Stockton, Commentary on Romans 13, Form #17.056, NikeInsights.fanguardian.org/publications.

Stockton, Correcting the Upside Down Gospel, NikeInsights.fanguardian.org/publications.

The IRS Hoax, Sovereignty Education and Defense Ministry, SEDM website.