

Continued from Page Three, "What Example Do You Set in this Local Church?"

Are You a Negative Example in this Local Church?

Along with good examples of faithful brethren in the New Testament there are negative examples as well. Demas forsook Paul and served as a bad example of a Christian then and today (II Timothy 4:10). Alexander the coppersmith did much evil to Paul, and was someone to be concerned about for the effect he may have on others (II Timothy 4:14-15). Diotrephes wanted the preeminence among brethren and needed to be confronted (III John 9-11). The church does not need examples like Demas, Alexander the coppersmith, and Diotrephes today.

When Sunday morning or Wednesday evening comes, those who serve as bad examples in a local congregation may not at services be found. They have chosen not to attend with the saints. They are saying through their actions that the kingdom of God comes second to them and by doing so, they portray an example not befitting a Christian (Matthew 6:33, Colossians 3:1-3, and Hebrews 10:25). Sometimes the bad examples attend every service, but they are there discouraging those trying to serve the Lord. When Bible questions need answered and older brothers and sisters of the faith (those who have been Christians longer than others) cannot answer, they are bad examples of growth. When Christians have questions about how to handle a matter in their lives spiritually they should be able to depend upon those who are Christians of age. When they cannot, a bad example is set forth. When those "younger in the faith" are the leaders in a local church; that does not serve as a compliment to those of supposed maturity (Titus 2:2-6).

When brethren assemble for worship and they find some who are not singing with the rest of the saints - a bad example is being set (Colossians 3:16). When a

brother or sister observes the "passover" when the collection is taken - a bad example is being set (II Corinthians 9:7). When a brother or sister in Christ abuses the Lord's Supper in any way - a bad example is being set (I Corinthians 11:29). When a brother or sister in Christ decides to talk during, ignore, sleep through, or other types of defiant behaviors during the preaching of God's word - a bad example is being set (Acts 17:10-11). When a brother or sister in Christ finds prayer to be of no importance - a bad example is being set (I Thessalonians 5:17). When brethren decide not to spend time with their fellow saints they are not being an encourager, but a discourager. (Who in this world could possibly serve as better people to have as friends, than those of like precious faith?) When a Christian fails to be a good example, it is because they themselves are not spiritually right in the sight of God and they have nothing to set forth that is good for others to follow.

Conclusion

The church of Christ is led by the Scriptures, but brethren need to resemble what is recorded in the word of God to teach by example. When Christians are setting examples that discourage brethren and possibly even lead others astray, the church of our Lord is not being strengthened. If you are failing in being a good example to your brethren it is time to change before it is too late (Luke 13:3; 5). If you are a good example continue to be such and grow daily that tomorrow you may be a better example to your brethren than you are today. The body of Christ is to be edified through each Christian (Ephesians 4:16), let us strive to get to that point. Credit: <http://www.wordsoftruth.net> ♦

*Truth is truth even if no one believes it.
Error is error if everyone believes it.*

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

How to Contact Us

Telephone: (920)499-5677
E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com



Our Address

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313

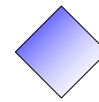


Schedule of Assembly

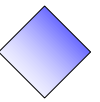
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com



The Voice of Truth



October 17, 2010

Authority in Religion

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Jesus Christ has ALL AUTHORITY. Moses prophesied, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall harken," (Deut. 18:15, 19). Peter applied this Mosaic prophecy to Jesus in Acts 3:19-26. God said, "Hear him" (Matt. 17:5)! Jesus said, "All authority hath been given to me in heaven and on earth," (Matt. 28:18). This leaves no authority for me, John Calvin, Mary Baker Eddy, Martin Luther, Joseph Smith, John Wesley, a Pope, or anyone else. The question is, "What did Jesus do with his authority?"

Jesus placed His authority in His word, the word that He spoke. Christ said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," (Jno. 12:48). If the word of Christ is that by which we are to be judged, then it behooves us to know what He said as compared to what others are saying. Also, if we are to be judged by His word, it makes no difference what WE SAY, what WE THINK, or how WE FEEL in religious matters. Christ's authority was not placed in Men, Councils, Assemblies, Ecumenical Groups, Catechisms, Disciplines, Creeds, Manuals, or Confessions of Faith. Christ's authority was placed only in His word.

Jesus' all-authoritative word was given from His mouth to His apostles. In His prayer, Jesus said, "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me... I have given them thy word," (Jno. 17:8, 14, 18, 20). Christ promised the apostles help in remembering His word, saying, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you," (Jno. 14:25-26). Paul could not have declared "the whole counsel of God" unless he had received Christ's word (Acts 20:27). Peter could only have received "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" and his knowledge of Christ through that word (2 Pet. 1:3). But,

what did the apostles do with that authoritative word?

Jesus commissioned His apostles to preach His word (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16). Their obedience to His command is shown in THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. Paul declared the word had been "preached to every creature which is under heaven" in his lifetime (Col. 1:23). Besides preaching the all-authoritative word of Christ, the apostles wrote it. In First Corinthians 15:1-4, Paul said he was making known, in a letter, the things which he first received. The Thessalonians were urged to "stand fast" and "hold" that which they had been taught, whether by word of mouth or by his first epistle to them (2 Thess. 2:15). Paul emphatically declared, "The things that I WRITE unto you are the commandments of the Lord," (1 Cor. 14:37). Therefore, that which he wrote was the all-authoritative word he had received from Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The all-authoritative word of Christ was written for OUR benefit. Luke's purpose for writing was, "that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed," (Lk. 1:1-4). "...these things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life in his name," was the purpose for writing the Gospel of John (Jno. 20:30-31). Paul's purpose for writing was that, "when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ," (Eph. 3:4). Again, John wrote, "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full," and "these things write I unto you, that ye sin not," (1 Jno. 1:4; 2:1). Are the words written by the inspired writers sufficient to guide us in religion?

John 20:30-31 tells us that it was written so we could believe and thereby be saved. John 2:1 tells us that it was written to keep us from sinning. It is through the written word of God that we have been "given all things that pertain unto life and godliness," (2 Pet. 1:3). Paul's

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

**Pages 1 to 2 - Authority in Religion
Pages 2 to 3 - "Except The Lord Build The House ..."**

Pages 3 to 4 - What Example Do You Set in this Local Church?

Continued from Page One, "Authority in Religion"

statement, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," **Sec-**

"Except The Lord Build The House ..."

By Jarrod Jacobs

About 1000 years before Christ, David wrote, "Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (**Ps. 127:1**). These words are just as true today as they were when they were penned. Unless the Lord is building the house (i.e., one's family) then the work men do is in vain.

Men today try to say a family can include two men marrying one another, or two women marrying one another. Some have said that polygamy is acceptable before God. Yet, when we read the Bible, we see that God has described just who it is that are to be married and why. In the beginning, we find that God created man and woman, and these two, male and female, were the ones to be married (**Gen. 2:18-25**). This was God's intention from the beginning. So said Jesus in **Matthew 19:4-6**.

How can the Lord build your house? Is this some kind of mystical saying wherein God chooses your mate for you? Of course not. Allowing the Lord to build our house means that we are allowing the Lord to take first place in our lives. All that we do and say in our home must be based upon what the Lord has already said (**Col. 3:17; I Pet. 4:11**). When a husband and wife submit their lives to the Lord's will, He will then build the home, and they will be truly blessed.

When a husband and wife determine that, no matter what, they are going to live as husband and wife for life (**Matt. 19:6; Rom. 7:2-3**), then they are allowing God to build their home. Sadly, our world says that marriage should only last so long as it is "convenient" for both partners. In fact, one practice becoming more widespread as the years pass is children being brought into the world without folks feeling the "need" for being married. There are many people today just "playing house" as the innocent children born to them are made to suffer.

Sometimes, people are living this way because they allowed their passions to get out of control, and what was beautiful within the relationship of marriage (**I Cor. 7:2**)

and **Timothy 3:16-17**, should prove that the WORD of the inspired writers is the sufficient guide for us today. If the all-authoritative word furnishes us with ALL THINGS, do we need the catechisms, creeds, dogmas, or manuals written by uninspired, fallible men? Certainly NOT! ♦

was made ugly due to sin. Sometimes, this behavior is excused as a way to get a "tax break" or a larger check from the government. How terrible that we justify our sins in the name of money! This is not only justified by younger folks, but also widowers and widows have justified their adultery in the name of, "I'll lose my SSI check if I get married." Such people need to get acquainted with **I Timothy 6:10**! This society has forgotten the words of Scripture which say: "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (**Heb. 13:4**).

Still others wish to make things "legal" and be married, but they have either divorced for an unscriptural reason, or are marrying someone who does not have the Scriptural right to be married (**Matt. 5:32, 19:9**). In such a case, they are not allowing the Lord to build their house, either! God does not sanction sin. He does not bless people spiritually for their wrongdoing. Since this is true, we know that someone trying to build their house in this way is doing it in vain! They are trying to build a house without the authority of God (**Matt. 7:21-23**). In such cases, the result is hearing Christ's sentence on judgment day: "Depart from me!"

Psalms 127:1 ends by saying, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." In other words, if we do not put our trust in the Lord, and allow Him to be the One ruling us, then it is a vain thing to try and protect ourselves! This is true in a city, in a family, or in a country! (Remember, as goes the family, so goes the city, the state, and the nation!) Therefore, if we think we can build a house, a city, or a nation without God, we are already defeated before we start. In reference to this, I like the words of Benjamin Franklin. More than 200 years ago, Benjamin Franklin stood before the Constitutional Convention and said, "I have lived, sir, a long time and the longer I live the more convincing proof I see of this truth: that God governs the affairs of men. If a sparrow cannot fall without His notice, is it possible that an empire can rise without His aid?"

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, "Except The Lord Build The House ..."

Conclusion

Are we trying to build our house without the Lord? If so, why are we doing this? David makes it clear that it is a

What Example Do You Set in this Local Church?

By Brian A. Yeager

Sometimes people view things subjectively, opposed to objectively. At times it is difficult for us to properly examine ourselves as we ought to (**II Corinthians 13:5**). It even becomes difficult at times to see our close friends and family members with an objective eye. Someone who is an objective person can "express or deal with facts or conditions as perceived without distortion by personal feelings, prejudices, or interpretations" (Webster's New World College Dictionary, 4th Edition). Being subjective is the opposite of being objective.

Everyone in a local church is setting some sort of an example for others to see, and very possibly follow. Everyone from the Sunday morning pew warmer to the enthusiastic Bible Class teacher is setting some sort of example. All that attend from the older Christian, to the young children, who are just learning about the Lord, are witnesses of behaviors that Christians show forth. Faithful Christians need to follow Paul's instructions through his letter to Titus: (**Titus 2:7-8**) "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you." During your reading of this article you need to be objective. You need to see yourself clearly. Then ask yourself the question: what type of example am I to others?

Are You a Positive Example in this Local Church?

We all should be striving to be good examples for our brethren to follow. We should be able to say things like the Apostle Paul said to the church in Corinth: (**I Corinthians 11:3**) "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." A positive example to follow is very much needed for all of us. We know that we have many within the pages of God's word, but what we are in the body of Christ is significant in the saving of souls. Christians are lights in the world (**Matthew 5:16** and **Philippians 2:15-16**), but that does not mean we are not lights within the church. For example, when we read the concluding chapter of the book of Ro-

waste of our time to do so. Friend, let us humble ourselves before God and accept His way of doing things. God loves us and He always has our best interests in mind. When we try to build a house without the Lord, we will fail every time. If we are doing this now, let us come to our senses, and repent! *Credit: www.southside-churchofhrist.com* ♦

mans we read of Phebe. She is an encouragement to brethren then and now, because she was a helper to Christians (**Romans 16:1-2**). Priscilla and Aquila were examples as they would risk their own necks for the sake of brethren (**Romans 16:3-4**). We need brothers and sisters in the body of Christ today like Phebe, Priscilla, and Aquila.

It is encouraging to come to services and find that everyone is there all of the time. We assemble together in part to edify each other (**Hebrews 10:24-25**). It is an encouragement to be able to say that brother and / or sister _____ will be at services today, because they are always there. Thus, those who attend faithfully are good examples for all to follow. It is encouraging to brethren to see growth in the lives of their brothers and sisters in Christ. As Christians we are to grow spiritually (**II Peter 1:5-10** and **II Peter 3:18**). Christians who are growing through studies in the word of God (**John 5:39**) are being good examples for their brethren to follow.

It is encouraging to notice your brethren worshipping correctly. We see good examples in how brethren worship. To hear the voices of brethren raised together in song (**Ephesians 5:19**), to note brethren remembering the Lord's death through partaking of the "Lord's Supper" (**Acts 20:7** and **I Corinthians 11:23-26**), to know that brethren are giving as they ought to (**I Corinthians 16:1-2**), praying with you (**Acts 12:2**), and partaking in the preaching of the Gospel (**Acts 20:7ff.**), is edifying. It is encouraging for brethren to spend time with one another outside of the assembling times of the local church (**Acts 2:46**). Brethren who lead through good examples are brethren who will show interest in others. They will want to be together so that each Christian can support each other. When going through life in the world it is needful to have one another to lean upon. Do you do these types of things and by so doing; do you show a good example to your brethren? If not, are your actions best described by saying you are a negative example to your brethren?

Continued on Page Four