

unspotted from the world, but it is equally important that we follow God's truth in our faith and practice. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). Abiding in the word of Jesus causes one to know the truth, and knowing and obeying the truth makes one free. Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32). The Hebrew writer said, "...He became the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him." (Heb. 5:9). Therefore, let us steadfastly love, uphold and defend the truth, and let us denounce, reject and shun all error. "Buy the truth and sell it not." (Prov. 23:23).

Credit: www.http://oakridgechurch.com/riggs/ ♦

Truth
Author unknown

One thing that is absolutely indispensable to the practice of pure religion is truth. "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding" (Proverbs 23:23). Whatever truth may cost (time, money, lands, houses, or physical suffering), it is worth the price; and once obtained, it must not be sold at any price.

It matters little what we think, feel, imagine, suppose, or would like to believe; the truth is what counts. Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

Apollos was an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures, fervent in spirit, bold, and convincing; but he lacked the one thing which all must have to be successful in preaching—the whole truth (Acts 18:24-28). Eloquence is not necessary if one has the truth; other things may be helpful, but are not essential.

To disregard, neglect, reject, or deny the truth is to dispense with the indispensable.

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦


"Reasons Why I Don't Wash"

(The following are listed to parody excuses for not attending services.)

1. My parents always made me wash as a child.
2. People who wash are hypocrites; they think they are cleaner than other people.
3. There are so many different kinds of soap: I could never decide which one was right.
4. I used to wash, but it got so boring, I stopped.
5. I still wash on special occasions, like Christmas and Easter.
6. None of my friends wash.
7. I'm still young - when I get older and need it more. I might start washing.
8. People who make soap are only interested in your money.
9. I'm so busy; I just can't find time to wash.

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

How to Contact Us	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com  	1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313 	Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm* <small>*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</small>

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com



The Voice of Truth



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Am I Your Enemy?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" Galatians 4:16. Paul did not desire to become an enemy of these brethren he loved. Because he loved them, however, he told them what they needed to hear rather than what they wanted to hear. It is hard to know people's reaction when you speak the truth, the whole counsel of God. It may hit and hurt. We are to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15); but we must speak the truth. It was Paul's duty to tell them the truth of God. It is the duty of every member of the body of Christ to present the truth even if it hurts, even to people who have itching ears. Too many people want soothing, deceitful messages instead of the truth (Isaiah 30:10).

We have been taught that preaching and teaching the oracles of God will make some enemies of the cross and of those who stand for the truth (Philippians 3:17-19).

In the words of Paul, "I am your enemy if I tell you the truth" that:

(1) There is one true church. This fact is seen in Paul's proclamation: He declared that there is "one body" (Ephesians 4:4). He affirmed that the body is "the church" (Ephesians 1:22-23).

(2) That salvation is only in Christ's church. All spiritual blessings are "in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3); forgiveness (Ephesians 1:7); redemption (Colossians 1:14); sonship (Galatians 3:26-27). The same process whereby one gets into Christ is the same way one gets into the body (church) of Christ (Galatians 3:26-27; 1 Corinthians 12:12-20; Ephesians 5:23).

Men need to hear the truth. Those who pervert the gospel are our enemies (Gala-

tians 1:6-9). Error will not save; it condemns (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). *

Having Pleasure in Ungodliness

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Ending the longest catalogue of sins listed in the New Testament (Romans 1:28-31), Paul concludes, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them," Romans 1:32. The sins were those committed by Gentiles after they rejected the knowledge of God. God decreed that Adam (and all of his posterity) was worthy of death (natural death), because of one sin. How much more then are these Gentiles worthy of death who habitually practiced these vile crimes? These most reprehensible sins were not only practiced by them, but were also condoned and sanctioned in others around them.

Not merely this passage, but others in God's word, tells us God's people must "Abstain from all appearance of evil." 1 Thessalonians 5:22. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," 2 Timothy 2:19. "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away," Proverbs 4:14-15. "Abhor that - which is evil; cleave to that which is good," Romans 12:9. Read again: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners," 1 Cor. 15:33. You can't play in soot and remain lily white. One of the greatest weaknesses in the church today is our toleration of sinfulness that surrounds us! We seemingly condone every evil sensual practice by not crying out against it! We watch programs on our TV that promote immodesty, adultery; homosexuality is funny, cursing and all man-

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ner of foul language is cool, we sit and watch other people dancing and it doesn't bother us, and on and on we go! Our society has become inured to "sexual freedom," "choice of lifestyle," and "sexual revolution" that few things are openly challenged, much less condemned.

"WHO NOT ONLY DO THE SAME, BUT HAVE PLEASURE IN THEM THAT DO THEM!" God's people must always "stand up and be counted for righteousness." ♦

"Buy the Truth and Sell it Not" By David J. Riggs

Satan has succeeded wonderfully in getting people to believe that the doctrine one believes has nothing to do with his eternal salvation. We often hear such statements as: "It is not doctrine that counts, but the way one lives," or "It matters not what one believes so long as he is sincere." Those who make such statements surely haven't analyzed them, and especially they haven't in the light of the holy Scriptures. The Bible clearly teaches that it does make a difference what one believes and practices.

LOVE THE TRUTH

We as Christians should give diligent study that we might be able to rightly divide the word of truth. We should not be foolish, but striving to understand what the will of the Lord is. In other words, we should be exercising our senses that we might be able to discern between good and evil, not being tossed to and fro and carried away with the error of men, but growing in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Acceptable righteousness can be found only in the revealed word of God, the gospel. Paul said, "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed...*" (Rom. 1:16-17). Righteousness is certainly not to be found in man's own wisdom. Man commits a grave error when he establishes his own

righteousness. Paul further said, "*For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*" (Rom. 10:3).

God's praise is given throughout the Bible to those who believe and know the truth and his condemnation is upon all who have no love for truth. "...*They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*" (2 Thess. 2:9-12). Thus, a love of truth is necessary in order to be saved.

UPHOLD THE TRUTH

If we will love the truth we will not only be willing to live in harmony with it, but we will be willing to uphold and defend it. The apostle Paul praised the Philippians because they were partakers with him in the defense of the gospel. "*Even as it is meet to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.*" (Phil. 1:7). The word "defence" is the word "apologia" in the original and means "verbal defence, speech in defence" and involves "laboring to make good one's cause" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, p. 65). Consequently, we should intensely struggle to maintain the purity of the faith. "*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life...*" (1 Tim. 6:12).

The apostle Paul repeatedly admonished us to strive to uphold and maintain the truth (2 Tim. 1:13). If one does not hold to the sound words, he becomes destitute of the truth (1 Tim. 6:3-4). Involved in the responsibility of upholding the truth is the condemning of falsehood. When we mention "condemning falsehood," immediately many want to object and complain. They tell us it is wrong to condemn other religions. "Judge not that ye be not judged," they say. They seem to think this means we can do no judging at all. This cannot be true, for Jesus also said,

"*Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*" (John 7:24).

There are types of judging which are wrong, e.g., we should not judge the secret motives of another's heart (1 Cor. 4:5). We shouldn't judge others more harshly or severely than ourselves (the one mentioned above). We shouldn't judge when we are guilty of the same error (Rom. 2:1). Furthermore, there are types of judging which are right and must be done. Jesus said, "*Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.*" (Matt. 7:15-16). 1 John 4:1 says, "*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*" (See also Rom. 16:17-18). These and other passages demand a judging of teachers. We are obligated to judge righteous judgment so that we can identify wolves in sheep's clothing and apostate groups.

Christians are often labeled "un-Christian" when they try to reprove falsehood in the religions about them, even when they try to do it in the mildest way they know how. Surely no one can object to our using the Lord's method of combating error. Jesus said, "*God said...but ye say.*" (Matt. 15:4-5). He put the teaching of God in such contrast with human error that it was impossible for his hearers to misunderstand or fail to see the truth. If we use the Lord's method on some present day religious practice, we would be no more unkind or un-Christian than was our Lord.

DO NOT FELLOWSHIP ERROR

The apostle Paul stated that error will eat as canker or gangrene. "*And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some.*" (2 Tim. 2:17-18). False doctrine grows worse and worse and eats away the soul as gangrene eats away the flesh. Those who put all emphasis on moral living and

none on true doctrine would like to think that Paul had in mind some ugly immoral practice. However, in this instance he had reference to doctrine, i.e., "*the resurrection is past already.*"

Notice also that both the teacher and the followers are rejected, i.e., "*overthrow the faith of some.*" Hymeneus and Philetus were condemned and so were all who believed their doctrine. Jesus said, "*If the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.*" (Matt. 15:14). Paul warned of some who would "...*Subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not.*" (Titus 1:10-11). (See also 2 Pet. 2:1-3). Thus, any who are holding to error are condemned whether they be instigator, promoter, or follower.

People who recognize error in the church of which they belong have a great responsibility. Eph. 5:11 says, "*Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*" Titus 1:13-14 says, "*Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.*" One cannot continue to have fellowship with those who are believing and practicing error. Instead, he has the responsibility to reprove and warn them. If one raises no voice of opposition, by silence he gives consent and thereby is also a partaker in iniquity.

How can one repent of an error while at the same time be a member of a church which believes and practices that error? For one to repent of an error, he must completely give up that error. As long as a person is a member of a church that has error, he is associated with error and is identified with error. Jesus said, "*Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.*" (Matt. 15:13). Those who are in a church that has error will be rooted up along with the others at the last day. Those who recognize error in the churches they are members of need to come out and be identified with the people of God.

It is important that we keep ourselves