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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.

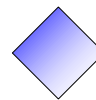
People who recognize error in the church of which they belong have a great responsibility. Eph. 5:11 says, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Titus 1:13-14 says, "Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish 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

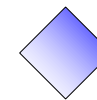
of a church that has error, he is associated with error and is identified with error. Jesus said, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." (Matt. 15:13). Those who are in a church that has error will be rooted up along with the others at the last day. Those who recognize 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 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: <http://oakridgechurch.com/riggs/> ♦



# The Voice of Truth



July 11, 2010

## 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 (2 Timothy 4:3). 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:

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).

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); son ship (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 (Galatians 1:6-9). Error will not save; it condemns (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). ♦

## "Satan Is Active!" By Jarrod Jacobs

To say the name "Satan" strikes fear in the hearts of many. Why is this? It is because we recognize Satan as God's arch-enemy. He is a powerful being who has been fighting against God since the beginning of man (Gen. 3). By extension, he is also the enemy of every righteous person who loves the Lord. Satan is a liar and a murderer (Jn. 8:44). He was in the Garden of Eden tempting Eve in the beginning (Gen. 3:1-6). He was present arguing with God about the faithfulness of Job (Job 1-2). He argued with Michael the archangel over the body of Moses (Jude 9). He was also present in the wilderness tempting Christ (Matt. 4:1-11; Lk. 4:1-13)! Yes, Satan was there. He was active, and trying to get things to go his way.

Yes, Satan was present on many occasions in man's history. He was active in the past, and has remained active to this present day, laying his "snares", or temptations, before men in an effort to lure mankind away from God (1 Jn. 2:15-17). Satan has his angels (Matt. 25:41), and they no doubt are busy doing his bidding as well. (If we are not careful, we can end up doing Satan's work too, if we are using our influence and words to encourage people in sin, see: Rom. 1:32; etc.!) Satan's activity and handiwork is seen anytime we yield to temptation and sin (Jas. 1:15), and therefore act in a way contrary to the will of God!

Remember, sin is a transgression of the law (1 Jn. 3:4). It is also through omitting God's law that we can be guilty of sin (1 Jn. 5:16; Jas. 4:17). Yet, how do we end up in this position? This happens when we have been lured away by our own lusts (desires) and enticed (tricked) into doing something we ought not, or refusing to do something we know we ought to do (Jas. 1:14-15). Yes, Satan is still active and uses his "wiles" to tempt, ensnare, and trap us in sin. As we have noted, the end result of sin is death (Jas. 1:15; Rom. 6:23)!

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About the Hillcrest church of Christ		
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<p>Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: <a href="mailto:hillcrestcofc@live.com">hillcrestcofc@live.com</a></p>  	<p>1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313</p> 	<p>Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*</p> <p><small>*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</small></p>
<p><a href="http://www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com">www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com</a></p>		

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The Bible describes the Christian in terms befitting a soldier for a reason (**II Tim. 2:4; Eph. 6:13-18; II Cor. 10:3-5; I Thess. 5:8-9!**) This is because Satan is at war with God and everything connected with Him. Please understand, Satan is active TODAY in this war! What is described in Scripture is not merely a spiritual war from the past. Rather, this spiritual war continues today! It is raging in the world now, in the 21st century! Therefore, as much as Satan is active, so also the Christian needs to be active!

Since Satan is active against God and His children, and we need to be active, then what ought our activity be?

**Let us be sober and vigilant (I Pet. 5:8a).** There is a need for being of a clear mind and of a vigilant demeanor that we might be ready for Satan's attacks. **I Peter 5:8** tells Christians to be this way because Satan is coming at us "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." In the wild, a lion will stalk prey and then use his "roar" to scare animals and see which ones are the weak and young and who have difficulty in running. Those are the ones that he (and the lioness especially) will target for the kill! In like manner, Satan is looking for the weak among us, the young, those discouraged, those having spiritual difficulties and not seeking the Lord's help, etc., as his "prey"!

**Let us be active in helping those who are weak among us.** The apostle Paul said that the Christians at Thessalonica needed to, "warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" (**I Thess. 5:14**). When I see this listing, I can't help but think that these are the sort of people that Satan is actively looking to attack and devour! As a Christian, I need to grow in grace and knowledge (**II Pet. 3:18**), and be the kind of person who actively looks out for the weaker

## "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.

and helps them. Think about it: These are the kind of people Satan is targeting. If he gets them and they seem to have no help or defense, then he has won even more souls. Those folks are then separated from God, fallen from grace (**Gal. 5:4; Heb. 3:12**), and are in danger of being lost eternally if they do not repent (**Acts 8:22-23!**)

**Let us be active in strengthening our own souls.** While trying to help others, let us remember we have a responsibility for our own souls. It was said best in **I Corinthians** when the apostle wrote, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (**I Cor. 10:12**). Never forget that there are "fiery darts" being shot at us by Satan, and we need to have our "shield of faith" at the ready to defend ourselves against these vicious attacks (**Eph. 6:16**). Are we active in this warfare? Are we pleasing the One who called us to be soldiers (**II Tim. 2:4**)? Have we forgotten that there even is a war? Perhaps we have been lulled to sleep because we have backed away from the "action"! We don't see Satan's activity because we are closing our eyes to the truth. Instead of being "transformed", are we perhaps trying to be "conformed" to the world (**Rom. 12:1-2**)? This is dangerous indeed, because this breeds a laziness in our lives and in the lives of others that we influence. Rest assured, Satan may be many things, but he is not lazy! He is active!

### Conclusion

Now that we are aware of these facts, what will we do about it? Will we be sober and vigilant (**I Pet. 5:8**)? Will we strengthen our souls and grow in grace and knowledge (**II Pet. 3:18**)? Will we be helpful toward others we see who are weak (**I Thess. 5:14**)? Will we be mindful of our own spiritual needs (**I Cor. 10:12**)? Yes, being a Christian demands much from us. It demands nothing short of our all (**Matt. 6:33**) because Satan is active!

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com •

### 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

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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 Philippian 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 Hymeneaeus 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." Hymeneaeus and Philetus were condemned and so were all who believed their doctrine. Jesus said, "If the blind guide the

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