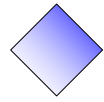


The Voice of Truth



August 5, 2012

Enemy of God

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Being a Christian is something matchless. It is a new way of life (**Romans 6:4; 2 Corinthians 5:17**). A new mode of life lived by new standards, with new values and attitudes. Pleasing God is a Christian's daily desire! *"Finally then, brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, even as ye do walk, — that ye abound more and more" (1 Thessalonians 4:1).* *"No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of (this) life; that he may please him who enrolled him as soldier" (2 Timothy 2:4).* *"For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10).* A Christian cannot serve two masters (**Matthew 6:24**). A Christian is marked by characteristics that set him apart from the world. He is one that is in the world, but not of the world (**John 15:19; 17:14-16**). A Christian loves *"not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (1 John 2:15-17)*. We are *"not conformed to this world" (Romans 12:2)*. A child of God keeps himself *"unspotted from the world" (James 1:27)*. *"The world hath been crucified,"* put to death for one who follows the steps of Christ (**Galatians 6:14; 1 Peter 2:21**). He knows that *"the whole world lieth in the evil one" (1 John 5:19)* and *"the land is filled with sin" (Jeremiah 51:5)*. A Christian denies *"ungodliness and worldly lusts"* and lives *"soberly and righteously and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:12)*. Christians *"are seen as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15)*.

Warning! Our Lord taught in the parable of the soils that the cares and pleasures of this life, serve to choke the gospel. They smother the Word of God, cause one to neglect spiritual things in favor of worldly things and turn him back to sin (**Luke 8:14**). These hearers loved the world and returned to it (**2 Timothy 4:10**). A Christian who gives way to evil desire, living for the cares and pleasures of the world (**Mark 4:19; Titus 3:3; Hebrews 11:25**), has

broken his vow to God. *"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4)*. There is no way we can be friends with the world or love the world and expect to have the favor of God. Friendship with the world equals enmity with God, which means a state of war with God. The church is Christ's bride (**2 Corinthians 2:11**) and every member of the church is pledged to be faithful to Jesus as Lord. Thus, the worldly person tends to compromise with the world. When Christian's exhibit desire for and make compromises with the world they are guilty of spiritual adultery. They have taken love, energy and time that belonged to Christ and have squandered it on the world. When the world is permitted to come into the heart, God is thereby crowded out. *"Wherefore come out among them, and be ye separate" (2 Corinthians 6:17); "Abhor that which is evil" (Romans 12:9).* *"Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Timothy 2:19)*.

We **MUST** maintain unquestioned loyalty to Christ; we must submit ourselves *"to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7)*. *"Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11)*. What is Christian living all about? It is the purging out of one's heart all the cares and pleasures of the world which destroy spiritually. It is the conquering and being victorious! *"For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, (even) our faith" (1 John 5:4)*. Thus, may each and every person be faithful and totally committed to God! The God of heaven, Who created us, gave us breath, life, and this wonderful world to live in (**Acts 17:28**) deserves the first place in our lives! As our Creator, Provider, Ruler, and Judge, we are indebted to honor and serve Him with our very best! Are you putting God first? *

***A faith that will not take us to worship will not
Take us to heaven!***

In This Issue...

Page 1 - Enemy of God
Pages 2 to 3 - "Are We Preaching Opinions?"

Page 3 - The church of Christ
Page 4 - Living For Righteousness | What Must I Do To Be Saved?

“Are We Preaching Opinions?”

By Jarrod Jacobs

In the last few years, I have noticed that it is popular to accuse folks of “preaching opinions” when those listening do not agree with the teacher or preacher. Regardless of whether or not the person is preaching the truth, the accusation is made when things are taught that “I do not like.” In connection with this, I have noticed that questions on the radio program are often prefaced with: “What is your opinion about?” Perhaps it is that people preface their questions this way because if it is only an “opinion” that is offered, rather than what Scripture says (**Jn. 17:17**), then if we do not like the answer, we can ignore it, because, after all, “It is just his opinion.”

Is this right? Are we now reduced to “preaching opinions” to people instead of preaching the truth? Is this an unfair accusation, or is it the truth?

There Is A Place For Opinions In God’s Plan.

First, let us be reminded that passages like **Romans 14** and **I Corinthians 8** recognize the fact that folks might have opinions concerning certain matters. In these passages, God allows for this reality. Having opinions on matters that are not matters of faith is authorized of God! He allows us to have opinions, but our opinions are not to be taught as “fact” or conditions of salvation!

Yet, when it comes to preaching the gospel to folks, whether publically from the pulpit, or across the dinner table, or in the break room, etc., we need to forego our “opinions” and present only Bible facts (i.e., truth) to people. Let us see how it was done in the Bible and follow the examples.

Holy Men Of God Taught What God Said, Not Their Opinions.

In the Old Testament, we read “*thus saith the Lord*” no less than 400 times! Yes, all of our Old Testament heroes, from Moses to Malachi, cried “*thus saith the Lord*” when speaking to the people! In so doing, they were making it crystal clear that they were not preaching opinions, nor the popular thinking of the world at the time! In fact, “*no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation*”. These “*holy men of God*” spoke “*as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit*” (**II Pet. 1:20-21**). No, no opinions were allowed in the canon of the Old Testament! Looking to the New Testament, we see a similar truth being expressed. Before Jesus went to the cross, He

promised “*another comforter*” would come to the apostles (**Jn. 14:16**). In so doing, “*He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you He will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come*” (**Jn. 14:26, 16:13**). Later on, we read from the apostle Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. He said, “*If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord*” (**I Cor. 14:37**). The apostle John also made it clear: “*We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error*” (**I Jn. 4:6**).

At no time in the Old or New Testaments do we read a claim of “originality” by any of the authors! They were not providing “opinions” nor the “popular thinking” of the day. They were providing folks with truth that originated with God (**II Tim. 3:16-17**)! God’s will was revealed to man through forty-some writers over 1600 years, and we are the beneficiaries (**II Pet. 1:3**)!

Therefore, if I am interested in speaking as the Bible speaks and being silent where the Bible is silent (**I Pet. 4:11**), then what will I be speaking? Will it be my personal opinion and experience? No way! If Jesus did not do this (**Jn. 12:48-50**), then how can I justify doing it?

How Can We Determine When Someone Voices An Opinion?

Let us return to the beginning of our article, and the complaints voiced by some concerning the preacher’s “opinion.” How can we determine whether or not someone is offering an opinion instead of the truth? Put simply, we compare what a person says with Scripture (**Acts 17:11**). If the teaching agrees with Scripture, then this one is not promoting an opinion at all. In such a case, if I am mad, upset, or otherwise feel rebellious toward what is said, then this is not a reaction to the teacher, but a reaction to God, and I will answer for it (**II Cor. 5:10**)! Trying to make myself feel better by saying, “That is his opinion” did not resolve anything, because if he taught the truth of the Bible, then it WASN’T his opinion! If, however, what one teaches cannot be proven by Scriptural authority, then it was his opinion that was taught.

Continued from Page Three, "Are We Preaching Opinions?"

we doing this?

Last, when we allow the Bible to be its own commentary in showing the fulfillment of prophecies and the like, we are simply teaching truth. It is not the expression of a personal opinion. Let us not forget this.

Defining Words Does Not Constitute Teaching One's Opinion.

While we are studying, let us also remember that when a teacher or preacher defines words for us so as to better explain a Bible word or passage; this does not constitute an "opinion". The writers of the Bible defined words from time to time. For example, the Lord's body is defined as the church in **Colossians 1:18** and **24**. In **Revelation 1:20**, we see the "seven stars" defined as "the seven angels", and "seven candlesticks" defined as "the seven churches." **John 17:17** gives us the definition of "truth". Read it and see. There are many other examples, but the point is that defining words is not expressing a personal opinion. Rather, it is getting to the heart of the matter in teaching truth!

Therefore, when someone today uses a Bible dictionary to define Bible words, this is not done to express a personal opinion! Rather, it is an effort to get to the heart of the matter and define a word from the original language (Hebrew in the Old Testament or Greek in the New Testament) rather than merely relying on the "common" or "popular" definition from 21st century English. Seeing that the Bible was not written in the 21st century, it is wise to go back and find the original meaning to Bible words! Are

Conclusion

Are there people guilty of teaching personal opinion? Absolutely! This was happening in Bible days (**Gal. 1:6-7; II Pet. 2:1-3, 17-19; Jer. 28; II Tim. 2:16-18; Rom. 16:17-18;** etc.), as it is happening today. Let us therefore be wise hearers, as well as be honest with the truth. When we "handle accurately" God's word (**II Tim. 2:15**), and when we mature spiritually (**Heb. 5:14**), we are better able to recognize when someone is pushing an opinion rather than teaching the truth.

Hopefully, it is clear that those of us who love the Lord and want to spread His word in public and private ways (**Acts 20:20**), are not preaching opinions. Rather, we are teaching the word of God to others in the assurance that those who are taught will do the same (**II Tim. 2:2**). Let us faithfully "preach the word" to folks and save their souls!

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

The church of Christ

Has:

- One Builder – Jesus Christ (**Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:9-11**)
- One Purchaser – Jesus Christ (**Acts 20:28**)
- One Head – Jesus Christ (**Eph. 1:22-23**)
- One Savior – Jesus Christ (**Eph. 5:23**)
- One destiny – eternal salvation (**Eph. 5:23**)

IS:

- The spiritual body of Christ (**Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23**)
- The kingdom of Christ (**Matt. 16:18-19; Heb. 12:28**)
- The depository of those saved (**Acts 2:47**)
- One body, not many bodies (**Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23**)
- One way to be added to the church:
- One must believeth that Christ is the Son of God (**Jno. 8:24**)
- One must repent of sins (**Lk. 13:3**)
- One must confess that Christ is the Son of God (**Rom. 10:9-10**)
- One must be baptized into Christ (**Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27**) ♦

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

Living For Righteousness

By Jonathan L. Perz

It is not uncommon to hear someone say they live for something. An avid hunter might say he “lives to hunt.” An avid golfer might say the same regarding his favorite interest. Such a statement suggests a passion for some enjoyable activity. Well, have you ever heard a Christian say, “I live for righteousness?”

Regarding the Lord’s death, the apostle Peter writes, “...who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness...” (1 Pet. 2:24). Do we understand this concept today?

Too many professing Christianity have merely died to sin, but fail to live for righteousness. Hence, their Christian lives are dull and listless. There is no passion for what they have become, what they now do and Who they now serve. Many who call themselves Christians have only come half way in their walk with Christ, but often give it all for some other worldly pursuit.

Someone who “lives for” something does not go half way, they go all the way. Have you ever spent time with a

rabid hunter? They are nuts for the sport. They buy the best gear and go to extremes to scout, prepare, and partake of the hunt. Likewise, an avid golfer will eat, sleep and drink golf. The same applies for any person who is passionately committed to some activity. If people can get so fired-up about comparatively trivial matters, why are not those who profess Christianity “fired-up” about what they do? Why doesn’t every Christian “live for righteousness?”

Living for righteousness entails passion about serving God. It encompasses the whole of a Christian’s life. They work to support their Christian activities (cf. Eph. 4:28). They live to worship God with fellow saints (cf. Heb. 10:24-25; Psa. 122:1). They love to study from God’s word (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15). They eat, drink and sleep Christianity (cf. Matt. 5:36). They would gladly lay down their life for Christ (cf. Luke 14:26)! They are passionate about what they believe!

Are you “living for righteousness”?

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

THINK! THINK! THINK!

What sort of church would the Lord’s church be if every member were just like me? ♦

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3

Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27

Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

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