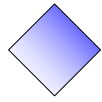


The Voice of Truth



July 27, 2014

The Lord's Church Must Stop Treating Sin Lightly

By Jimmy Pettigrew

The apostle Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:2). Likewise he said, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). "Them that sin reprove in the sight of all that the rest also may be in fear" (1 Timothy 5:20 A.S.V.).

At times I wonder if some have even read this charge today. There are those who are disgusted, displeased, offended by sound gospel preaching. **REPROVE** implies that one is in error and needs arguments presented to convince him of the truth. **REBUKE** implies that one must be warned of wrong doing. There is a trend to believe that the possibility of offending someone in preaching the Bible is to be avoided. We are to preach the word not pamper the world. We are to reprove, rebuke, not relax in sin, approve, and exonerate it! We hear such remarks as: "None of us are perfect", "You will drive them away," "We don't want to make anyone mad", "That will split the church," being used by some. There is an attitude, a stance that has crept into the Lord's church to abolish, banish, expel, eliminate reproving, and rebuking from our message. "It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools" (Ecclesiastes 7:5). In some areas, the Lord's church looks more like a "social club" of religion, than it does the blood-bought body of Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 1:19).

Today, we hear, "Don't rock the boat," and "It will tear the congregation apart if you preach on that," "This is called getting too personal." Many preachers are afraid to take a strong stand and help the congregation see the need to bust sin out of the camp. God did not allow His people of Israel to continue in sin because He was afraid of stirring up a hornet's nest, or getting personal or that His name would suffer if He allowed His people to be taken into captivity. The Lord desires that His church be pure. "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the

washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:26- 27). Christian's are to put off sin (Colossians 3:8); and, the word from whence put off is translated signifies moving out and away from. It is unthinkable that Christ will own His bride if she becomes unchaste, plays the harlot after the world, and has her affections taken away from Christ and set on things of the earth.

Paul told the elders from Ephesus, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27). Paul is saying in these verses that we have the charge to point out brother sins (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20). We have many in the Lord's church who assembles with the saints when they want to, who haven't attended in weeks, instead of reproving and rebuking this member about his sin, we ask him to serve on the Lord's table or lead prayers. We act like nothing is wrong! And that tells the member he is fine in the sight of God, and this tells him also that he can miss and still be called on these duties. Instead of tolerating sin, we are to reprove it (Ephesians 5:11). Tolerance of sin is condemned (Revelation 2:20-21). If a congregation permits impure individuals to remain unchastened within its fellowship, it thereby becomes a partaker of their sin and will also drift out of favor of the Lord (Revelation 2). Failure to reprove, rebuke and purge out sin leads to toleration of sin, and toleration of sin leads to a love of sin, the love of sin leads to a practice of sin, and the practice of sin leads to spiritual death (Romans 6:23). The church is wounded when we fail to reprove and rebuke sin. A single sin which is permitted to remain in the body will destroy the whole body (Revelation 2:1-5).

When we cover up sins in the church, we corrupt the morality and virtue of the church and destroy its efficacy to

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honor God or to save men. Sin must be exposed and purged out of the church or the church becomes corrupt and a synagogue of Satan instead of the church of Jesus Christ. God cannot be honored by covering up evil in the church. To expose sin, error and false teachers is to proclaim to the world that they seek truth, purity, holiness, and godlikeness. But sadly, Bible preaching that gets to the heart of the matter is often rejected. Sin is just a misunderstanding, not transgression of God's will. Sin is something you just do not bring up, even if it is true. One

preacher was told that there were certain subjects which he was told not to preach. What happens when a man preaches on a Biblical topic and is then told his preaching is "too hard?" The cry is not to "repent of sin," but "get rid of the trouble maker, the preacher." We need to "*hate every false way*" (**Psalm. 119:140**). The key to the whole matter is love. "*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent*" (**Revelation 3:19**). To ignore or tolerate wrong doing among its members is not a sign of true love. How much do you love God, His word, the church, your brothers and sisters? ♦

"God Sees What Man Does Not See"

By Jarrod Jacobs

When Samuel was sent by God to anoint one of Jesse's sons as the next king, he was sure that he had found the new king when he saw Eliab (**I Sam. 16:6**). Why was this so? He looked on his "countenance" or appearance, and his stature, and assumed that Eliab was the next king. "*But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart'*" (**I Sam. 16:7**).

When Samuel went to anoint the new king, and saw Eliab, he said, "*Surely the Lord's anointed is before him*" (**I Sam. 16:6**). However, he learned very quickly that God was choosing the king, and not Samuel. Therefore, the new king would have qualities which pleased God, not necessarily Samuel! After meeting seven sons, and not finding the king among them, he asked for any more sons, and was told of David, the one whom God chose as king. Thus Samuel, "*anointed him in the midst of his brothers*" (**I Sam. 16:12-13**).

The lesson of I Samuel 16 ought to be taught again and again to people today! We need to understand that God has the ability to look on the hearts of folks when men cannot! God can judge motives, will, and intentions, but man cannot do that. Jesus said, "*Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them*" (**Matt. 7:20**). In other words, a man can see what one does or does not do. Yet, he cannot know a person's motivation unless this is revealed. In contrast, God knows the inner thoughts and intentions of a man, regardless of whether or not they are revealed outwardly! Our Father sees what man does not see!

God Sees Sin And Its Consequences. Man Does Not.

While men today look at folks and see only the "outward" man; God can see the "inner" man, including

our sins. Not only can God see sin, but He knows what it does to our souls! For instance, read what God said to the people through the prophet Isaiah: "*Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged. Why will you still be struck down? Why will you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but bruises and sores and raw wounds; they are not pressed out or bound up or softened with oil*" (**Isa. 1:4-6**).

Notice how God described those in sin. He said they were, "struck," "sick," "faint," rebels, unsound from head to foot, wounded, bruised, and unmedicated. Perhaps when a man looked at their outward appearance, these folks would have seemed healthy, happy, and without a problem. Yet, when God looked upon them, He saw the truth! (See also: **Rev. 3:17**) Paul, inspired of the Holy Spirit, said, "*...but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day*" (**II Cor. 4:16**). Notice please that what was described in the first part of this passage could be seen by all, "the outward man", which is perishing. Yet, the "inward man" (the part God alone sees), is being renewed day by day.

Friends and brethren, which part most concerns us? Is it the part of man which we see, or the part which we do not see? When God looks at us, does he see a healthy soul; or a sick, diseased soul, in need of the spiritual "medication" provided by the Great Physician?

God Sees All Good And Evil. Man Does Not.

Solomon declared, "*The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good*" (**Prov.**

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15:3). Man does not have this ability. While a man will see good and evil in his life, he cannot be in "every place" as God can (**Jer. 23:24**)! God sees it all, though! Seeing that this is true, does this not make Him imminently qualified to be our Judge (**Rom. 2:7-11**)?

Men and women can have vast amounts of experience in this life, but we can never match the experience God has! We may have seen a lot in this life, but we have not seen as much as God has! God is aware, He is omniscient, and He sees much more than man will ever see! He sees the good and the evil that man does not! Therefore, when He looks at us, is He looking at evil people or good people?

God Sees Eternity. Man Does Not.

One of many amazing attributes God has is the ability to see "the end from the beginning." The many prophecies we find in the Bible are the result of God's ability to see into eternity. Therefore, God's prophecies are specific, accurate, and true.

To get a glimpse of the power God has, please read the following passages from the book of Isaiah. God says, "*Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose' (Isa. 46:9-10).* Later on, God says, "*The former things I declared of old; they went out from my mouth, and I announced them; then suddenly I did them, and they came to pass I declared them to you from of old, before they came to pass I announced them to you, lest you should say, 'My idol did them, my carved image and my metal image commanded them' (Isa. 48:3, 5).*"

God can see the "end" from the "beginning." He lives

outside the confines of time. Man cannot see such because we live moment-by-moment within the confines of time!

Conclusion

When we compare God's abilities to man's, may we be humbled and put in our place! God can see the hearts of men. He can see the true nature of sin. God is omniscient, seeing all the good and evil. He also sees eternity, since He lives in eternity and not in the confines of time as men do.

Since this is the case, what is keeping us from putting our complete faith and trust in Him and His word? Seeing that we have such an amazing and wonderful God, can we not also trust His word in everything? (**Jn. 17:17**)

Sadly, we have a world of people who will turn their backs on God, and deny His very existence! Is not such an act declaring that this person can do what God does, and see what God sees? What arrogance! Usually, it is the person who does not believe in God who accuses those who do believe in God of being "arrogant," and "intolerant." Yet, the truth is that the one who claims that God does not exist is the one who is arrogant; for such a claim says that this person has all the knowledge of the universe and knows God does not exist! A denial of God actually puts such a person in the place of God!

Friends and brethren, let us learn our place. Let us humbly, lovingly, and willingly obey the will of God. Let us fear Him (**Ecc. 12:13; I Pet. 2:17**), worship Him in spirit and in truth (**Jn. 4:24**), and live faithfully (loyally) for God all the days of our lives (**Rev. 2:10; I Cor. 15:58**). Let us thank God that He sees what He sees, and that He is so benevolent as to want us to be in Heaven with Him for eternity (**II Pet. 3:9**)! *Credit: The Old Paths - 6/29/14* ♦

SUPPOSE - JUST SUPPOSE

Yes, just suppose that next Sunday Jesus stood at the end of the pew where you sit as you were about to place your offering in the collection plate, and just suppose that instead of the collection plate, he held out his hand, the hand that was nailed to the cross for you. Would you be willing to place your offering in that nail pierced hand?

Could you look upon that face stained with blood from the thorn pricked brow; see the body that was beaten and placed upon the cross, could you do this, look him in the eye and say, "*Lord I'm giving all I can*"?

Suppose as you looked upon Jesus, with the torn hands and feet, the beaten body, the pierced side and head crowned with thorns, he said to you, *This is how I showed my love to love.* ♦

Seven Habits of Extremely Wise People

By Jonathan L. Perz

There are many self help books on the market that help one to become better at something (i.e., Seven Habits Of Highly Effective People). I would like to propose seven things that an extremely wise person would take heed and follow. It is written in **Psalm 107:43**, "Whoever is wise, and will observe these things, even they will understand the lovingkindness of the LORD."

1. A wise man HEARS the Word of God (**Rom. 1:16; 10:17**). He is not only a hearer but a doer of the word as well (**Jas. 1:23-25**). This is the source of all of his counsel (**Psa. 119**).

2. A wise man BELIEVES in the deity of Christ (**John 8:24; 3:16**). He believes not only in the deity of Christ, but he believes and lives by every word that comes from the Lord.

3. A wise man REPENTS of his sins (**Luke 13:5; Acts 2:38; 17:30**). He daily repents of his sins as he becomes aware of them and strives to keep himself unspotted from the world (**1 John 1:8-9; Prov. 28:13; Jas. 1:27b**).

4. A wise man CONFESSES faith in Christ (**Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:36-39**). He confesses it when he begins his walk with Christ and will tell everyone of the great things the Lord has done for him (**Mark 5:19**).

5. A wise man is BAPTIZED into Christ for the remission of his sins (**Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Pet. 3:21**). He is completely immersed in a watery grave, and rises to walk in newness of life.

6. A wise man REMAINS FAITHFUL throughout his life (**Rev. 2:10; Heb. 10:36-39**). Once his primary obedience is accomplished, he must remain faithful to gain the crown.

7. A wise man will plan to spend his ETERNITY IN HEAVEN (**Matt. 25:34, 46**). This is the reward of faith, and I can think of no wiser plans to make than to spend life eternal in heaven. *Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦*

Happy is the man who walks so close to God
That there is no room for the devil to
Get in between. ♦

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

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