

*In
Search
of*

Truth and Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Philipians 4:8 (NASB-U)

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Oh Boy! It is Allowed!

By: Bill Hall

How many times have new converts received sound instructions concerning the life of a Christian, only to have the instructions nullified by the example of older members? A brother in Canada recently told me of his first trip south after his conversion. Struggling to overcome his tobacco habit--because he had been taught that he ought to do so--he watched with delight as the men of the "down south" congregation went out between Bible study and worship to enjoy their cigarettes. "O boy!" was his immediate reaction; "It's allowed!"

The same thing happens in other areas of teaching. "Attend every service," new converts are told, and sound reasons are given to back such instructions. But Brother Smith only attends the 11:00 o'clock service, and he is accepted as a faithful member. "One service a week must be sufficient," they say to themselves. "O boy! It's allowed!"

"Study your Bible daily, and prepare beforehand for every Bible class," they are wisely told. But they see little evidence of Bible study on the part of others, and some of the comments in Bible classes definitely betray a lack of preparation. "Ignorance of God's word must not be too bad," they conclude. "O boy! It's allowed!"

"Modesty of dress is essential for Christians," they hear repeatedly. But then they hear of mixed swimming among the members and see Sister Jones wearing the tightest pants in town. "O boy!" they think; "It's allowed!"

Older Christians ought to be constantly aware that they are being watched, watched by newer converts who are looking to them for examples. Part of the teaching those new converts are receiving is coming from the pulpit; the other part is coming from the lives of the other Christians around them. What are they seeing? What are they learning? How sobering to think that some new convert might have been discouraged and led astray by something he saw in my life! Let each live in every aspect of his

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304-737-1422**

TIMES OF SERVICES SUNDAY

Bible Classes*	10:00 AM
AM Worship	10:45 AM
PM Worship	6:30 PM

WEDNESDAY

Bible Classes*	7:00 PM
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(* Bible Classes for All Ages)

life so as to be able to say, "*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*" (**1 Corinthians 11:1**).

Newer converts, though, must learn that God's word is the standard of authority, not the conduct of other Christians. Loyalty in a kingdom is determined by loyalty to the king rather than to the subjects of the king. It is to Him that one pledges his allegiance when he becomes a Christian, and he must be faithful to Him whatever others around him may do or fail to do.

One's "O boy! It's allowed!" then must be limited to those things which God allows in His Word. But even then he would anticipate a certain reserve in one's expression, for the true Christian's greatest delight is not in some activity that just happens to be "allowed," but in serving the Lord. "*For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is Life and peace*" (**Romans 8:6**).

Today's Sermon:

Equipping the Saints

Desire is often the Mother of the New Interpretation

By: John Waddey

All have heard the old saying, "Necessity is the mother of invention." It's truthfulness is demonstrated daily. There is a religious variation of this proverb. "Desire is often the mother of new interpretations."

Our Protestant neighbors greatly desire salvation without baptism. Faced with the several verses that clearly link salvation and baptism, what can they do? They interpret all the verses that link faith with salvation and pronounce that the Bible teaches salvation by faith alone. Some desire to have their infants baptized. Finding nothing in the New Testament about infant baptism, they discover the Hebrew ordinance for circumcising baby boys. Noting that the surgery made them members of the covenant nation, they conclude the New Testament must teach infant baptism. Then they discover that Lydia was baptized and all that were in her household (Acts 16:15) and voila they interpret that to mean babies were baptized. They are free to proceed as they wished.

There was a time when any man who preached among churches of Christ understood this and exposed those who used this faulty method for their distortion of God's Word. Now a generation of exegetes have arisen among us who, because of faulty training, are using this same discredited method to achieve the approval they seek for their doctrine, worship and congregational activities. They need authority for such things as women in church leadership roles, instrumental music, infant dedication, interpretative dancing in worship and similar practices. These things they desire to have, but no authority is found for them in the New Testament of Christ. Refusing to accept that as the final word (Matthew 28:20), they search the Old Testament and find just what they are looking for. But there stands Colossians 2:14 as an impediment to their desires. Paul says that Christ blotted out "*the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross ... Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in a new moon or a sabbath day....*" (2:14-16). Not to be deterred, they reinterpret the passage to mean that Christ merely

took away our condemnation, nailing it to the cross. Now they can claim those verses from the Hebrew Scriptures and offer them as justification for their innovations.

The desire to be free to add anything they wish to the worship of the church drives them to deny the oft repeated principle that God's silence is prohibitive. It is respect for that principle that caused our brethren to reject instrumental music, choirs, solos, communion on other days than the first day and a host of other practices of denominational bodies. Positively stated, we must "*not go beyond that which is written*" (1 Corinthians 4:6 ASV). The example is seen in Hebrews 7:13-14. There, the writer notes that since the priesthood was reserved to Aaron's sons, of the tribe of Levi, and since Moses said nothing about men of Judah serving as priests, there had to be a change of the law before Christ could be our High Priest. Other citations commonly given are the cases of Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-4) and Noah's instructions for building the ark (Genesis 6:14-17). We now see our promoters of change laboring long and hard to find a new way to interpret God's Word that will eliminate the idea of a law of prohibitive silence.

Wishing to preach new and different doctrines and yet remain among Churches of Christ, change agents labor to find a new meaning to 2 John 9 which says, "*Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God...*" After much hard labor they bring forth a new interpretation, "Behold, it means the teaching about the divinity of Christ." Now they can teach and do as they wish and this verse cannot be used to reprove them.

To escape the binding authority of the New Testament of Christ, these brethren have employed their exegetical skills and concluded that the New Testament is not the law of Christ. It is a love letter from the husband to his bride. The epistles are friendly letters to churches, but not to be considered as of binding authority. It is hard to do, but their system allows them to neutralize those many verses that speak of the law of Christ (Romans 8:2; Galatians 6:3; James 1:25; 1 John 3:4, etc.).

Desiring to be accepted by their local ministerial alliance and their Evangelical theological peers, these brothers have had to reinterpret the role of baptism in salvation. Since our religious neighbors flatly reject the idea that baptism is necessary to salvation and since they tend to scorn those who think it is necessary, the masters of creative hermeneutics have restudied the matter and concluded that baptism is a declaration or testimony of ones salvation. So much for Acts 2:38 and 22:16.

Thus is fulfilled the saying, "Desire is mother of the new interpretation."

News N Notes

Remember these in your prayers:

- Paula and Lydia Prager
- Joyce Coen as she recovers from her knee surgery.
- Mary Jane Myers has been in the hospital for the past week
- Terry Smith
- Earl Miller
- Trudell Tennant
- Lucille Harless, Dave Harless' mother
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband.
- Virginia Malick, Peggy Miller's mother
- Blake Swanson, Dorothy Lancaster's grandson
- Bud and Merl Frey
- Tammy Garrison, Zeda Goddard's daughter
- Audrio Gaudio, Nancy Morris' great-granddaughter
- Marie Roberts, & Ed's father, Jim Roberts.
- Ila Marshall, Harold Marshall's mother
- Cary & Grace Lancaster

Nursing Home:

- Pauline Sellers
- Ethel Mahan

Shut-ins:

- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Pauline Midcap