

In
Search
of...

Truth & Right

GENESIS

Tim Henderson, Editor

Volume-03

Issue-52

07/26/2009

"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." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

A publication of the
**Wellsburg
church of Christ**
Which meets at:
112 Sunset Ave.
Wellsburg, WV 26070
304-737-1422

We appreciate so much your presence here with us today. We would like to extend an invitation to join us at any of our other times of worship.

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
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)

Today's Sermons:

AM: How can a young man/woman keep their way pure?

PM: The Medes & Persians

Audio CD's are available free of charge in the foyer.

*Please visit our website:
www.truthandright.org*

If you have any questions regarding what we teach and practice, please feel free to ask

Blessed are the Flexible *Bobby Graham*

A few days ago in Canada the following saying appeared on a church sign: "Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape." It is difficult to know always how far people intend for such sayings to be taken. If the saying was meant to convey the idea of flexibility in personal relationships, the saying is well taken. On the other hand, if it included the current idea of being open to new truth, then the religious humanism demonstrated in the saying must be rejected. According to Bible teaching, there is a time *when tolerance is no virtue*. Fairness demands that we admit that we do not know which of these ideas was intended; however, the two possibilities open the door for profitable study of the Scriptures.

Some Flexibility Commendable

It is a poor attitude that inflexibly refuses to look not only upon one's own things, but also on the things of others. Such is the mind of Christ described in Philippians 2:3-11. Prejudice is that enemy of the soul which decides before hearing the situation or the facts and apart from a weighing of the matter on the scales of God's Word. The Bereans were commended by the Lord for their willingness to hear what was taught them and to search the Scriptures to ascer-

In this Issue:

Blessed are the Flexible—pg. 1—Bobby Graham
Where do Elders come from?—pg. 2—Paul Earnhart
Those Serving & Announcements—pg. 4

tain its acceptability (Acts 17:11). James said that the wisdom coming down from the Lord is marked by a willingness to yield (James 3:17), but the Gentiles were said to be guilty of being implacable (unmerciful, unwilling to be agreeable) in Romans 1:31. The reason for such unconcern for others and the associated refusal to consider them is self-centeredness. Jesus said we are to love neighbor as self (Matthew 22:33). Surely we can see that we must remain flexible in relation to others and in relation to God's will for us, so that we might practice what He desires.

Some Flexibility Not Good

The attitude that recognizes no certainties, no absolute truth, no finality in what the Lord has revealed is one of unbelief, for the Lord has assured us of these matters. One who wishes to remain aloof from the idea of absolute truth, maintaining a tentative approach to all things, does so because of the shaky ground that he occupies. On the other hand, the firmness desired by God is the result of the firm foundation erected by God in His sure Word. For one to be flexible in relation to the Bible is to manifest uncertainty about God's credibility. Three reasons explain why this kind of flexibility is not desirable.

1. God's Word is not subject to change. Because God has indicated the finality of Scriptures in passages like 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Jude 3: Matthew 28:19-20, we have no basis for expecting any additional word from the Lord. No latter-day revelations, dreams, vision, or gentle nudges are in store for anyone.
2. Truth is narrow and unyielding. Its nature demands this be said. Truth in any field—mathematical, geographical, or religious—does not change because of whim, official decree, or changing conditions. What Peter declared regarding the exalted position of Jesus the Son of God is yet true. Paul's affirmation of the one body (church) is still true. Nor has it stopped being true that obedience is the path to God's favor (Matthew 7:21-23). Regardless of man's changed view of these matters, God-given truth does not change.

3. The pure gospel of Christ suffers no other gospel (Galatians 1:6-8). Efforts to please men are responsible for all changes imposed by men. Not only is God not pleased by such attempts, but He declares His anathema (consignment to destruction) upon those doing so.
4. The Divine pattern is irreplaceable. Under whatever arrangement God has instituted in His dealing with human beings, He has always made it clear that His way is the only way. It is the role of God to show man the way, and it is the role of man to walk in that way. Passages earlier noted suffice for this point.

Flexibility is good in yielding to put others ahead of self and to practice God's will, but it is evil when it leads us to abandon the certainty of Biblical teaching and to look for something else. Are we flexible in those ways that we should be? Do we remain steadfast in belief and practice of the truth of the Lord? May we remember that the highly honored "god" of tolerance must also bow before the great God of the universe.

Where Do Elders Come From? *Paul Earnhart*

The scarcity of functioning elders (bishops, pastors) in local churches has led some Christians to conclude that they are a rare breed with rare qualities. Otherwise, they reason, why would they be so difficult to come by? Contrary to this rather discouraging view, elders do not have to be imported from outer space. They are generated from ordinary human beings from "*every tribe and tongue and people and nation*," and perhaps it will help identify the reason for their scarcity if we trace, step by step, where elders originate.

First of all, and elementally, elders come from strong Christians, men and women who by the power of God have been radically re-born (John 3:3-6). Now, here are some remarkable people. They have given up everything for the Lord's sake, claiming not even

their breath as their own (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 2:1-2). Theirs is a life of utter trust in the Son of God (Galatians 2:20). Why should we be surprised that something special should arise in the characters of folk like this? They will love God supremely and care about others in a self-sacrificial way.

Secondly, elders (Greek *presbuteroi*, older men), by definition, originate from Christians who are men. There is nothing special or remarkable or difficult here. From the outset, men as well as women have been touched by the appeal of the gospel (Acts 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 8:12; 17:12,34) and we can logically anticipate that wherever the gospel is preached, this will continue to be so.

Thirdly, elders are to be taken from among Christian men who are mature in years (older) and in the faith (*"not a novice,"* 1 Timothy 3:6). The bulk of the bishop's required qualities are no more than would be expected in any mature disciple: *"... sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality ... no brawler, no striker; but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money ... good testimony from them that are without ..."* (1 Timothy 3:7) *"... not selfwilled, not soon angry ... a lover of good ... just, holy, self-controlled; holding to the faithful word ..."* (Titus 1:6-9). Every Christian, without exception, is expected to grow and mature into *"a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ..."* (Ephesians 4:13). There is nothing unusual about the Lord's servants becoming increasingly like Him. It is their failure to grow up that is considered aberrant (1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Hebrews 5:12-14).

Fourthly, elders are drawn from mature Christian men who are married. The Holy Spirit has indicated that the elder is to be *"the husband of one wife"* (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6). Here, again, there is no special obstacle. As a matter of course, most men marry.

Fifthly, elders are to be taken from mature Christian men who are married and have children. His children are to be believers and those still in his household are to be respectfully obedient (Titus 1:6; 1 Timothy 3:4). There is nothing remarkable about a married man having children. Most married men are fathers, and from such a characteristic popu-

lation new disciples were drawn in the past and will be drawn today. Nor should it be thought unusual for a Christian father's children to be faithful disciples and obedient to him. Godly parents will, more often than not, lead their children to serve the Lord (Proverbs 22:6). In New Testament times, it was not uncommon for whole households to be converted (Acts 10:24; 11:14; 16:31,33).

From among mature Christian family men with many different abilities there are bound to be some who are effective teachers (1 Timothy 3:2), able to nurture and train their brethren in the righteous ways of the Savior and protect them from the deceptions of false teachers (Titus 1:9; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-5).

Now, from all these qualifications of elders there is nothing so significant as the fact that they are devoted Christians. That they are men, married men, family men is not anything special. That they possess native skills as teachers gives them no distinction, either. Many men who have no faith in Christ at all could say the same. In the case of elders, it is the unqualified devotion that these men have to Christ that gives meaning to their family relationships and to their God-given skills.

I cannot tell you how often I have heard complaints about the absence of elders in local churches and the difficulty of finding qualified men to serve. It is not helpful merely to describe the problem and complain about it. We need to find the exact source of this critical shortage and formulate some godly solutions.

One thing we must face is that the Holy Spirit makes elders out of devoted Christians and churches that are filled with half-hearted and indifferent disciples don't have any material to work with. The answer to the shortage of every kind of worker in the kingdom of God is to get each child of God among us to be totally committed. If we can do that, the problem will take care of itself in time. If not, we will keep on complaining about the shortage of elders today and assure an even greater shortage tomorrow. Until we are willing to deal with our own shortfall in devotion, it is a little unrealistic to complain about the other fellow's.

Those Serving This Week

Sunday AM

Class Prayer	Earl Miller
Announcements	Chuck Isinghood
Song Leader	Ken Prager
Scripture	Hosea 6
Reader	Dan Marton
Prayer	Don Coen, Sr.
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Lord's Supper	
Bread	Harold Marshall
Fruit of the Vine	Matt Ferrell
Serve	Terry Smith
Serve	Blake Headen
Closing Prayer	Tim Henderson

Please inform the one in charge of announcements if you are unable to fulfill your responsibilities.

Sunday PM

Announcements	Chuck Isinghood
Song Leader	Ed Roberts
Scripture	Hosea 7
Reader	Dan Marton
1st Prayer	Don Coen, Jr.
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Communion	Matt Ferrell
Closing Prayer	Harold Marshall

Wednesday

Announcements	Chuck Isinghood
Class Prayer	Dave Harless
Song Leader	Singing/Praying
Invitation	Earl Miller
Closing Prayer	Don Coen, Sr.

News N Notes

Please continue to remember these in your prayers:

Traveling:

- Nathan Marshall is in England

Recovering:

- Marie Roberts
- Ann Rudolph

Prayer Requests:

- Merl Frey
- Zeda Goddard, also her sons, Dallas and Terry, and her daughter Tammy Garrison
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband, as he continues to deal with cancer treatments.
- George Hutto, preacher from Alabama diagnosed with cancer
- Cary and Grace Lancaster
- Virginia Malick, Peggy Miller's mother
- Alfred & Mary Jane Myers
- Jimmy Roberts, Ed & Marie's son
- Jim Roberts, Ed Roberts' father
- Chris Shane
- Monty Wallace, Charissa Wallace's father
- Corey Williams, a friend of Tim & Anna Henderson is undergoing cancer treatments.

Don't forget our Shut-ins

Nursing Home:

- Ethel Mahan
- Pauline Sellers

At Home:

- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Betty Hunter
- Pauline Midcap

Send them a card—give them a call—let them know we are thinking about them.

If someone needs to be added to this list, please call:
304-914-2262 or 304-914-2263