

In search of...

Truth & Right

Volume 10 Issue 16

April 19, 2015

Eject the Pilot?

"What on earth is going on? Why the delay?" the exasperated airline passenger exclaimed to the flight attendant as they continued to set idle on the runway.

"Oh, the pilot complained about some strange noises he heard coming from the engine compartment," she replied.

"Are you going to be able to get the problem fixed?" he suddenly, soberly asked.

"We already have," the stewardess answered cheerfully. "We've replaced the pilot."

Seriously; how many of us would calmly continue to set on that plane, completely confident in our ability to arrive at our destination safe and sound? And yet, when it comes to spiritual matters, how many times does a very similar scenario occur, and yet no one even raises an eyebrow? How often does a faithful elder or preacher of the gospel hear and seek to warn those assembled for the flight home about the "strange noises" he's hearing that could spell disaster for the entire group... and he is subsequently and summarily replaced as a result?

For example, how many a faithful preacher has heard the "strange noises" coming from some of the darkest corners of their congregation's loudest members, clamoring and clattering for such things as acceptance of those unscripturally divorced and remarried into their fellowships without

repentance; for instrumental music to be integrated into their currently biblical worship; or for women preachers, teachers, and/or song, dance, and prayer leaders to be able to "exercise their talents" in those worship assemblies? These are all "strange noises" as they are entirely foreign to – and even condemned within – Scripture and the New Testament congregations of the Lord's church we see experienced and in evidence therein.

I know of a preacher who sought for several years to alert the assembled he served of the spiritually deadly nature of the liberal noises beginning to emanate from the few who had "loosened up" their stance dramatically on marriage, divorce, and remarriage amongst other things. And as is sometimes the case when such faithful, spiritual "pilots" seek to warn those assembled of the fiery crash and burn danger associated with such foreign-to-Scripture noises, they, like he, soon get summarily replaced by those unbothered by such "strange sounds." Because just like with an engine, one loosened nut doesn't remain alone for long as the stress and strain it puts on the rest soon overwhelm them as well. In the case of such when it comes to a congregation, the complete breaking loose from their biblical moorings – as well as the deadly crash it inevitably causes – soon

become both irreversible and inevitable. We should thank the good Lord for those elders, preachers, and congregational leaders alert enough to recognize the danger such doctrinal "strange noises" represent, and that something is not right, before continuing on to a sure-fire crash! Instead of simply ignoring their warnings and replacing them, how much safer we'd all be in those assemblages, if instead, we committed ourselves to upgrading, repairing, and solidifying the whining and unstable machinery causing the potentially deadly problem in the first place!

Consider with me for a just moment, only a few of the biblical precedents and pictures of such deadly crash-and-burn disasters we see in Scripture; disasters which could have been easily averted by alertness, but were presumptuously perpetuated by those who were spiritually "dull of hearing" and ignored the warnings (Jeremiah 10:6-23; Matthew 13:14-15; Hebrews 5:11-12).

Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-2) had no problem with – and even, like some 'replacement' preachers today, helped create and perpetuate – the stinging scent of "strange fire" coming from God's altar. Their deadly, fiery, crash and burn end is legendary, as they reaped exactly what they'd sown (Gal. 6:7-8).

In 1st Kings 22, God's faithful prophet ("pilot") Micaiah sought to warn Israel and Judah that he saw and heard the deafening sound of a sound defeat coming at the hands of the Syrians if they continued on their current course. King Ahab and Israel immediately replaced him and his sound counsel with that of those who chose not to see and hear the troubling future scene that Micaiah did. Ahab's impending death and the imminent defeat of his assembled army were thereby utterly and irreversibly sealed by their decision to ignore the faithful "pilot's" warning, and replace him with those unbothered by such troubling and insightful indicators.

As fast as God could send his people faithful prophets to pilot them, his faithless people summarily replaced them with leaders who would "not prophesy to

[them] right things; [but] speak to [them] smooth things, [and] prophesy deceits... [Who would insist that the faithful pilots and prophets] Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, [and] cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before [them]" (Isaiah 30:10-11). This they did continually, even eventually ridding themselves of the airline owner's Son when He came to guide and pilot them home, warning them in the process of the troubling smoke He smelled coming in on their horizon (Matthew 21:33-22:14).

The faithful "angels" (pilots, ministers) of five out of the seven groups of assembled congregations of spiritual travelers mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3, were to warn those ready for take-off about the dangers that needed to be corrected beforehand, if they were to avert disaster and successfully complete their journey to their heavenly homeport. The pilot for Ephesus Airlines needed to have the crew ratchet up their repentance and return to their first love (Revelation 2:1-7). The pilot for Pergamos Trans-Hadean had to alert those he had on board about the unacceptable sounds of sensuality and sexual immorality as well as deafening din of Nicolaitan false doctrine he heard whirling away from within (2:12-17). The Thyatiran Trailways "heir-bus" pilot also needed to warn everyone on board about the strange, Satanic, and foreign to the scriptures siren sound of female leadership lulling some to sleep and putting them on a collision course with complete crash and burn condemnation from the "less than friendly skies" (18-29). Sardis flight 3126 (Revelation 3:1 to 6) had some "dead" batteries and components without any "holding" power. (These, like some congregations of the Lord's church, may still be in existence, preaching and teaching up a storm, but are oblivious to the fact that there's a whole bunch of dead people on board – according to God – going down hard and fast, all the while completely oblivious to the fact that they're already doomed, until and unless there's an immediate, drastic warning and emergency course correction). All of this, while the Laodicean jet liner lacked both the ability to adequately heat up its

engines, as well as to cool them off due to a critical coolant leak (3:14-22).

In all of these Revelation two and three "heir" line examples (Romans 8:4-17), we see, sense, and smell the potentially fatal problems that would – and still will – lead to fiery crashes of the entire assemblage, if not immediately noted and thoroughly corrected. And so we say, God bless the (angel) pilot, preacher, elder or leader, who is alert and caring enough, to notice and then to also sound the warning and alert the rest of the "flight crew," as well as the assembled (Ezekiel 33:1-9; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22; Hebrews 13:17), of these eternal-life threatening and "strange noises," which, according to Scripture, simply should not be there and so should serve as a "sure-fire" sign that something is very, very, deadly wrong.

Remember: the pilot isn't there to "tickle your ears" and tell you everything's alright when it truly isn't (2 Timothy 4:3-4; Jeremiah 6:13-19). He's there to help get you safely to your destination. The faithful to God's word, old paths elder, preacher, bible class teacher or congregational leader isn't there to help make you happy – he's there to help make you holy (1 Peter 1:13-2:3). He isn't there to tell you necessarily what you *want* to hear, but to tell what you *need* to hear, in order for you to make the proper adjustments, corrections, and repairs so that your flight home doesn't go down in a fiery ball of flames (2 Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 1:6-10, 4:16; Revelation 20:10-15, 21:7-8).

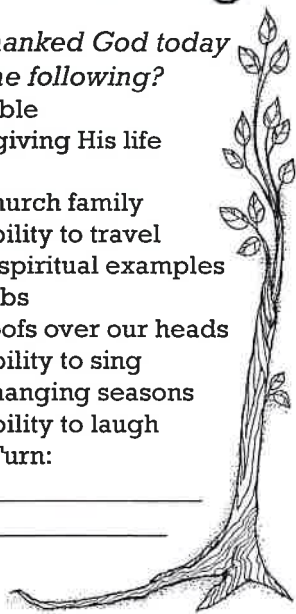
And if you are "on-board" with a congregation of people whose standard operating procedure is to replace any pilot who dares repeatedly warn of these "strange noises," or, if the pilot to the flight you're on simply isn't bothered by such foreign to Scripture noises, then, if you value your eternal life, you'd better immediately vacate your seat, conduct an emergency exit, and "book" a different flight, with a people and a pilot that are willing to warn of and correct problems, instead of ignoring them and replacing the pilot who dares sound such a warning! Otherwise, your flight will end in eternal flame, instead of on the golden runway at your heavenly home heirport at long last!

Doug Dingley

dear God,
thanks for this
beautiful life
and forgive me if
i dont love it
enough.

*Have you thanked God today
for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- The ability to travel
- Good spiritual examples
- Our jobs
- The roofs over our heads
- The ability to sing
- The changing seasons
- The ability to laugh
- Your Turn:



This bulletin is published by the
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Christian Q&A



What is your favorite part of attending the Wellsburg Church of Christ?

I enjoy greeting all the members and visitors.

When were you baptized?

April of 1978

What is your favorite hymn we sing?

It's a toss-up between #9 and #5. I love to sing them both. I also love the thoughts in 106.

What individual from the Bible do you look up to? Why?

I admire the apostle Paul very much. He always gave his service to God his all and when he was instructed of his error, he made the necessary changes in his life with no complaints.

What do you want others to know about your religion?

I may not be perfect but I serve a perfect God the best of my ability.

What makes you a strong believer in your faith?

The design and order of the universe leaves no conclusion except that there is a creator and that creator is our God.

What is your greatest strength/weakness as a Christian?

I feel my strength is my desire to serve and my weakness is that I don't take more time to study and teach.

What advice would you give someone who is new to the church?

The best advice I can offer is STUDY, STUDY and STUDY. Always put God first. If "friends" want you to do what you know is wrong get yourself some new friends who are Christians.

What is an effective way to spread God's word and why?

I believe in this age the Internet and the combination of YouTube and Facebook make it very easy and simple to share the word of God with anyone, anywhere and at any time. Much seed is planted in this manner.