

PARTICIPATION IN EVIL

The short letter of 2 John tells us plainly not to accept nor to aid those who would not bring the "doctrine of Christ" to you. Especially are we to avoid the sharing in their evil, and asking the Lord to help them in their error by bidding them "Godspeed." Be careful how you answer the various false teachers that parade our neighborhoods when they greet you by saying "God bless you." If you answer them the same way, you have just invoked the Lord's help with something He hates! Let us not become partakers of their evil deeds.

There is never a reason to be impolite to these misguided people, but do not allow politeness to be a guise for weakness. Though we need not be rude, let us be strong and powerful with the truth. We must *always* be in sharp contrast with the false ways of this world, allowing them to feel the edge of the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. When the ambassadors for the devil feel welcome and comfortable in our presence, then we have compromised the faith, and have bowed the knee to Baal!

More and more of our brethren are criticizing criticism! Not only is this hypocritical, for they do what they condemn, but this also gives aid to the enemy and helps to rout the soldiers of the cross.

The plea of today's "ecumenical movement" is to "agree to disagree" and to strive for "unity in diversity" and by all means we "must" be "politically correct!" Such contradictory hogwash! Let us read again such passages as *"and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11); "preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Timothy 4:2); "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21)*. Not only will we learn to test all things, but we will again be reminded to rebuke rebuking! We must have **no** fellowship with darkness or with those who practice it. This includes our own brethren--when they will not repent from sin.

Let us hear an end to drivel like "The Power of Positive Thinking", "I'm OK, You're OK", and the philosophies of Charles Swindol, Norman Vincent Peale and Dale Carnegie. Let us return to the words of the Master, the pure spiritual milk of the word, and practice the psychology of Jesus the Christ and we will once again find unity, truth, and harmony. The body of Christ will not be ripped apart by false doctrines for we wield the sharp two-edged sword and have no fellowship with error. May we *never* sheath that sword!

PARTAKERS IN EVIL

It is quite obvious that many brethren today do not teach nor preach the pure Gospel of our Lord. There are some too who will not actually teach error, but who will fail to teach the whole truth on "touchy" subjects (thus, their practice is in error). Then there are those who will preach very strongly **for** what is right, but will not say two syllables **against** what is false. Now we know that we are not to allow the false teacher any sway with our minds, nor are we to wish him well in this endeavor. The apostle John made this most clear in his second "general epistle"--

"Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (2 John 9-11).

Again we know that, to be inconsistent is to place oneself in the position of being corrected by another, even in the presence of many. This was the case with the apostle Peter when Paul had to denounce his inconsistency "before all" (see Galatians 2:11-21). We must conclude therefore, that if we are truly going to "be not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17), and "prove what is well-pleasing unto the Lord" (Ephesians 5:10), then we simply cannot "be therefore partakers with them" (Ephesians 5:7), nor can we "have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11)!

In light of all this doctrinal evidence to the contrary, why do some otherwise very sound and capable men allow themselves to be assigned places on the same platform with men who are questionable in their soundness and sometimes outright false teachers? Do the sound brethren who allow this really not realize that they are giving credence to the false brother? I do not speak with regard to those who will meet men on the polemic platform, for this is necessary (though few false teachers will consent to meet). Rather I refer to various "Lectureships" on college campuses or other places where no distinction is made between the sound man and the false man. They both are merely invited to speak on an assigned topic relating to the theme of the Lectureship.

Some brethren will preach long and hard regarding "liberalism," yet next month they will be included on the same program with some of those who espouse the things he was denouncing earlier. Are they thus guilty of

liberalism? Not necessarily, but such is surely inconsistent and helps give the liberal an audience among those who would not otherwise be exposed to them. Not all brethren are aware of certain men's liberalism, thus the result of this practice I am addressing is that the liberal finds acceptance by many more due to the appearance made by the sound brother. This is a sad and dangerous thing!

If Peter was correct when he instructed us, "but like as he who called you is holy, **be ye yourselves also holy** in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15-16), and if it is the case that false teachers are guilty of denying our Lord (and it is, II Peter 2:1ff), then how can some be on programs as equals with these false teachers?!? Just here, some may object by saying, "Are not these you call 'false teachers' our brethren?" My answer: sometimes they are not! Sometimes they are what Paul called them in Galatians 2:4, **false brethren**. Let us not forget what John said of some false teachers: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us" (1 John 2:19). Again, some might ask, "Should we not strive for unity (Psalm 133:1)?" Absolutely! However, the Lord never called for mere union, not even unity that is unqualified. Note that Paul speaks of the "unity **of the Spirit**", Ephesians 4:3.

Let us allow the Psalmist to define true brotherhood unity: "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, And of them that observe thy precepts" (Psalms 119:63). **This** is the Biblical view and definition of unity. For myself, I do not have companionship/fellowship with those who do not observe the precepts of God. How then can I have such with those who are good men, but who share companionship/fellowship with those who do not observe God's precepts??

As harsh as it may seem, we must remain as consistent as we can. Closer lines of fellowship are needing to be defined. It is difficult enough for the Lord's church these days with the wholesale apostasy so evident, but sound men who appear with those who are liberal do nothing to correct or influence the liberal brother. Rather all they do is influence the membership to accept the liberal as a good, sound man. This is not right!

RAGER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

SUNDAY MORNING	BIBLE STUDY	9:30 A.M.
	WORSHIP	10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY EVENING	WORSHIP	6:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY	BIBLE STUDY	7:30 P.M.
Preachers:	Robin W. Haley	614-751-1082
	James Grayson	614-409-0941

May 24, 2009

Weekly Budget: \$1360.00

Wednesday's Wisdom:

"Zacchaeus: a man who laid up treasures in Heaven. So ought we!" Zach Haley

Continue to remember in prayer: Lloyd & Barbara Moore, Hubert's sister and brother in law, Steve's sister, Suzie's mom.

Sad news: Carol & Jack Whites granddaughter passed away last week.

Melanie Haley will be needing a break from her teaching...**SOON!** We need someone to take her Sunday class, and another for her Wednesday class.

Building cleaning schedule: We need someone to volunteer for the month of June.

Grounds cleanup: Thanks to Richard (I think) who dug out the dead ground cover by the drive-through. That looks lots nicer. Now, if we only had a few flowers in there.....