



Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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FELLOW-WORKERS ADVANCING THE TRUTH

By
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Christians need to understand their obligation to support the advancement of the cause of the Lord. The Lord has given us the sacred duty and privilege of becoming fellow laborers with Him in the growth and development of the church of Christ. As preachers of the gospel, if we have not taught converts that they have a duty to support the work of the Lord, we have not taught the whole counsel of God.

How many are willing to go, live with the people, and live like the people they are seeking to reach? Is it the case that some make the material demands so high that they excuse themselves from taking the truth to souls that are lost? LET US CONSIDER SOME PASSAGES AND THE TRUTHS PRESENTED IN THEM.

Third John 5-8

"Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their

journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth."

Among the lessons on supporting the Lord's work are the following: (1) The passage teaches that we have a moral duty, "we ought" to do it. (2) The passage teaches that when we support those promoting the truth, we become fellow helpers of the truth. (3) The passage

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teaches that we, not the world (Gentiles), are to promote the truth. (4) The passage teaches that this is a "faithful" work, and if it is a faithful work, when we do not engage in faithful works we are unfaithful. (5) The passage teaches that Christians need to be taught to support the development of truth and not the advancement of error.

Matthew 10: 9-14, 40-42

"Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet ... He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that

receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

Let us consider the lessons that are here. (1) All support for the work before them was not to be present before they advanced the cause of truth. (2) They were to seek out honest recipients of the message and there abide with them, hence obtain their support. (3) Those supporting them were to recognize that they too would be recipients of the same reward, even the small contributions would not go unnoticed by the Lord. (4) Those not willing to receive and support the cause of truth were to be rejected and those willing to support the truth were to be sought.

Acts 16:15

"And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us."

What may we learn from Lydia's conversion? (1) She was a lady who received the truth. (2) In receiving the truth she was taught the obligation she had to promote the truth. (3) She prevailed on Paul and his traveling companions to abide in

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her home as they advanced the cause of truth in Philippi. (4) Have we faithfully taught new converts to feel the obligation to support the cause of the Lord?

Second Corinthians 8:1-5

"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."

There is a weakness in some, and it seems that they have a relative scale when it comes to giving. Is it the case that those who have more material things have an obligation to reach the lost but those who have less material things are excused from reaching the lost? I believe I have seen

those who so reason. How does this attitude compare with that of the Macedonian brethren? (1) Paul said that they were in deep poverty. (2) Paul states that they gave beyond what was expected of them, "beyond their power." (3) Paul said they did so because they first gave themselves to the Lord. Is it possible that herein lies a problem, are we converted to the Lord or not?

First Timothy 6:5

John 6:26-27

"Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." . . . "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

As preachers we must make it evident that we are not in

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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

preaching because of the monetary gain to be derived. Jesus knew that some would abuse their blessings and follow Him for the wrong reason. Serving the Lord and seeking the lost must be first and foremost in our lives. Support must be secondary. Will I preach if I have to work at a secular job in order to do so—would I be willing to make tents as did Paul (Acts 18:1-3)? Material things are to serve us, material things must not be our “goal.”

The church began without supporting congregations from America or other countries. Brethren must recognize they have a duty to teach their converts to support the truth and preachers must be willing to set an example—be willing, if need be, to work and support themselves. Ponder these two questions: Will I preach if I have no support? How much support will I need to preach?

Conclusion

Let it be understood that these reflections are not to be taken as being against supporting congregations or preachers. The passages we have considered show that the “*the workman is worthy of his meat*.” However, we have sought to focus on the duty of those converted to the Lord having a sacred and moral duty to support the cause of truth. This includes new converts (Acts 16:15), it includes those with much (I Tim. 6:17-19) and it includes those who have little (II Cor. 8:1-5).

There are many in the world who would hear and obey the gospel if we would take the

message to them. We ask again, how many are willing to go, live with the people and live like the people they are seeking to reach. Is it the case that we make the material demands so high that we excuse ourselves from taking the truth to souls that are lost? Brethren, think on these things.



“Communion?”

I recently attending a wedding. During the ceremony a type of “communion” was served the individuals being married. The wedding program called it communion, and the preacher doing the ceremony explained the “communion” as a type of commitment made by the Lord. He called upon the couple to make the same type commitment to their marriage and then served only them what appeared to be the elements of the Lord’s Supper.

Reflections

There are a number of things that crossed my mind as I observed this service. (1) Biblical authority came to mind. What passage(s) could be read that authorizes the Lord’s Supper in a wedding? (2) Perversion of Biblical items also came to mind. Here we have an item taken from the Bible (communion, I Cor. 10:16; 11:17-34) and used as man wishes without any consideration to how the communion services of true worship should be offered.

When we further reflect upon the situation this is only one example of many perversions that are evident. For example: (a) The Church in which the wedding took place finds no basis in the Bible, it is man-made. Men often take Bible terms and using them as they choose without due consideration to what constitutes proper usage—a genuine church of the Lord. (b) The

title by which the preacher officiating was known is unauthorized by the Bible. (c) The Church in which the wedding occurred teaches immersion in water before it will permit entrance into it, but also teaches that baptism has nothing to do with salvation or entrance into the Lord’s church. Again, baptism is a Biblical term, but to take this act and use it without due consideration to what the Bible teaches is a perversion of the concept of baptism. (d) This “communion” service at the wedding was on a Saturday. The only time we know the Lord authorized the service was on the Lord’s day (Acts 20:7). (e) The particular religious group that had this special “communion” on Saturday does not have weekly communion as the Lord authorized.

This is sad enough to witness in a denominational church, but it has been attempted by some in the Lord’s church. I am fully confident that some in the Lord’s church would not see anything wrong with having a “communion” service at a wedding. Why do I say this? Because some have no difficulty being in fellowship with those who do other things in worship without Biblical authority, i.e. worshiping with mechanical instruments of music.

Conclusion

Compromise on one point leads to surrendering on other points. Those who practice religion without Biblically justifying their religious practices are on the road to full fledge apostasy as we have reflected in these brief comments.

If God has sanctioned communion, then, we must follow what He sanctioned as He sanctioned it. If God has not authorized communion in weddings, we pervert His will by introducing it ourselves (2 John 9-11; Col. 3:17; Luke 6:46; Matt. 7:21). (JMS)

Registration Schedule

Florida School of Preaching

Fall Semester Begins August 21, 2000

Date _____ Phone _____

Name _____ S.S.# _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Check Classes Desired Classes Marked with "*" Are Taught at Extension Locations

Hours	Course	Instructor	Credit
Monday			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	Hebrews & Galatians 21343	Davis	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	Introduction to Old Testament 31379	Kenyon	3
___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	1st & 2nd Corinthians 11335 (High Springs)*	Burgett	2½
___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Life of Christ 11317 (Sarasota)*	Stilwell	2½
Tuesday			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	English Grammar 11324	Kenyon	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	Old Testament History 21339	Stilwell	3
___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Romans 21361 (Bushnell)*	Stearsman	2½
___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Topical Bible Studies 11344	Blackman	2½
___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Biblical Eschatology 31376 (Orlando)*	Kidwell	2½
Wednesday			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	Life of Paul 21362	Stearsman	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	Topical Bible Studies 11344	Kenyon	3
Thursday			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	Ezekiel & Daniel 21314	Stearsman	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	Song Leading 11333	Davidson	3
___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	1st & 2nd Corinthians 11335 (Auburndale)*	Blackman	2½
___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Christian Evidences 21344 (Jacksonville)*	Mosher	2½
Friday			
___ 8:30 to 12:00	World Religions 31375	Blackman	3
___ 1:00 to 4:15	Sermon on the Mount 31380	Kenyon	3

Please Include \$5.00 Registration Fee

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