

Our Prayer List

- ◆ James Ray Adams
- ◆ Sarah Adams
- ◆ Dawn Copes
- ◆ Bill Cyrus
- ◆ Dottie Daniels
- ◆ Jackie Eubank
- ◆ Tom & LaVonne Haines
- ◆ Keith Hodges
- ◆ Beulah Keppler
- ◆ Bob Meiers
- ◆ Gaylin Miller
- ◆ Liz Miller
- ◆ Mike Miller
- ◆ Janice Ortman
- ◆ Hallie & Don Phillips
- ◆ Jewel Price
- ◆ Cora Shrake
- ◆ Katie Wood
- ◆ Mark Young
- ◆ Shirley Young
- ◆ Geco "Hannah's Aunt"

Health

Encouragement

- ◆ Bill Copes
- ◆ Don Craig
- ◆ Matt Wood

Order of Service

Morning

Song Leader	Doug Cyrus
Prayer	Don Craig
Table	David Craig
Assist	Jerry Witt
Assist	Bob Calvert
Assist	Arnold Miller
Lesson	Shawn Daniels
Prayer	Charlie Bryson

Evening

Song Leader	Eric Whitaker
Prayer	David Craig
Lesson	Shawn Daniels
Prayer	Jerry Witt

"Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool." (Proverbs 19:1)

This Morning Sermon

"The Letter to the Seven Churches of Asia—Sardis"

(Rev 3:1) "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."

(Eph 2:1) "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."

Weekly
Memory
Verse



centering our mind on our material needs, we need to center and circle our mind on the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Once we do this then the material needs can come next.

This is the Christians priorities. To be a citizen of the Kingdom of God and make proper preparation for the condition of your soul is the number one priority. The material needs, wants and desires are your second. Jesus says, "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." (John 6:27)

Christianity is not a cultural religion. It is not a piece or section of your life. True Christianity is your life. It is the center of your being. Your thoughts, actions, and outlook on life are completely influenced by you being a Christian.

Christ says, showing the high priority of Christianity in ones life, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." (Matt 19:29) Obviously, God does not want you to turn your back on your family. Paul also says, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (1 Tim 5:8) What Christ is stressing is that you being a Christian is above all else, even your family. (Matt 10:37-39)

So, in order to be acceptable to God, we need to truly seek His Kingdom and His righteousness. If one would ask you if you have found His Kingdom, what would you say? His kingdom is here on earth now. It is not seen or measured by

the instruments of a surveyor, but it is within you. (Luke 17:21) We become citizens of this kingdom when we become free from our sins. Paul says, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col 1:13-14) This Kingdom of God is synonymous with His church. (Matt 16:18-19) Christ told His apostles, "... upon this rock I will build my church; and

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the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Here Jesus is speaking of the one and same divine institution. Jesus promised to build His church and promised to give the keys to open the door of that divine institution.

The apostles used these keys on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), when they preached the first gospel sermon that ever graced the earth. Before the day of

Pentecost, the gospel was preached only in promise and never was fully taught, because Christ had not yet died and resurrected. But on the Day of Pentecost, the full gospel was preached; the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Those that heard the apostles believed in their word and wanted to know what they needed to do. Peter told them to repent and be baptized for the remission or forgiveness of their sins. (Acts 2:38) Once they believed and obeyed they were added to the church or Kingdom of God. (Acts 2:41, 47)

Once they were in this kingdom, they continued persistently in the doctrine of the apostles. (Acts 2:48) They truly did as Christ instructed and sought first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Will you do the same? If you do, then all the other blessings of God will follow!

separation. God still requires it—a separate church. “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but now are the people of God.” (1 Pet. 2:9, 10.) As fleshly Israel was called out of Egypt, God has called the church, spiritual Israel, out of the world. And to retain the favor of God, the church must maintain that separation distinct and peculiar.

1. The church must maintain separation in speech. “Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard in me.” (2 Tim. 1:13) The power of a united language is demonstrated in the Tower of Babel. It became the bond of an apostate union which God had to break up in a confusion of tongues. And it is so that unity and purity of speech—calling Bible things by Bible names—is a bond among Christians that will triumph over error and bring order out of confusion.

2. The church must maintain separation in doctrine. Paul’s charge to “preach the word” and his admonition to “speak thou the things that become sound doctrine” need constant emphasis today. There can be no compromise. Jeremiah said: “My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” (Jer. 2:13.) God’s word is the fountain of living water, our only source of truth. The creeds and doctrines of men are broken cisterns. A compromise with error can only be regarded as a repetition of the evils assailed by the prophet Jeremiah in his day. The New Testament command to “touch not, taste not, and handle not,” does not refer to strong drink, but to “the commandments and doctrines of men.” (Col. 2: 21, 22.) It is a warning against flirting with error and

fraternizing with denominationalism. The growing idea that the “church of Christ” is just a church among churches will prove fatal, and it must not prevail. It is the church or nothing. It is only one way or none. Any participation on the part of members of the church of Christ in denominational functions can only compromise the church and is detrimental to the cause of truth.

3. The church must maintain separation in worship. The Old Testament injunction to “take heed lest ye turn aside” has its counterpart in the New Testament counsel: “Let no man beguile you, . . . intruding into those things which he hath not seen, . . . and not holding the Head, . . . after the commandments and doctrines of men. Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship.” (Col. 2:18-23) Self-devised worship is condemned along with man-written creeds and man-made doctrines. The New Testament pattern must be adhered to. The forms and formalities of men in worship must be shunned. God’s worship is sacred and God is jealous. He requires separation in worship.

4. Finally, Christians must maintain separation in life. Terms of dignity are applied to Christians. The church is “a chosen generation,” it is “a royal priesthood” and “a holy nation.” Christians are to “show forth the praises [or excellencies]” of God who called them. But is there any visible distinction in the lives of professed Christians today and admitted non-Christians? What is it that non-Christians do that the majority of professed Christians are not doing?

The demand of the Bible upon Christians is to deny “ungodliness and worldly lusts” and to live “soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” It is a demand for separation of life. “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”

FEW



A Separate People

By: Foy E. Wallace Jr.

The divine idea of separation in religion is as old as the Jewish race. God divinely determined to raise up a people to be his own, a peculiar people, separate from all other people, to preserve belief in the true and living God, to prepare the race of man, then in universal apostasy, for the coming of the Redeemer of man.

Abraham was chosen of God to be the father of the chosen race. But idolatrous Ur of the Chaldees was not a land to nourish such a race. Influences were overwhelmingly against God’s purpose to raise up a separate people. Hence, the call of God came to Abram to abandon country and kindred and seek a home in an unknown land. It was a stern requirement, but the true philosophy and absolute necessity of such a demand is seen, and the lofty purposes of God justify the radical measure. “So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him.” And that is the beginning of separation—a separate family.

Years afterwards the posterity of Abraham, through a series of varied



providential circumstances, settled in the land of Egypt. There they grew into a numerous race. Their presence within the empire presented a rather ominous aspect to Egypt’s Pharaoh, and, as a safety measure, the Israelites were reduced to serfdom. Time developed that they could not serve God in Egypt. Their religion was contrary to Egyptian customs and their worship was in direct conflict with Egyptian idolatry. Separation was essential. God called them out of Egypt. The emancipation of Israel was accomplished by wondrous power. A peculiar nation was formed at Sinai, with peculiar laws, a peculiar government, and peculiar life and relations. In keeping this law and maintaining this separation Israel was blessed. But when they departed, changed their government (1 Sam. 8) served other gods (Deut. 8:19), and formed alliances, they were rejected by God and subjected by their enemies. And only after reformation did God grant them restoration. (Ez. 10:10,11.) The lesson of the story is separation—a separate nation.

But that is not the end of the story of

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Knowing the Doctrine

By: RL Whiteside

Doctrine is teaching. It used to be common for denominational preachers to preach what they called “doctrinal sermons.” On such occasions they preached on controverted points, or on points wherein their churches differed from others. Had they examined the Bible more closely, they would have discovered that any sermon with teaching in it is a doctrinal sermon, no matter what might be the nature of the teaching. “But speak thou the things which befit the sound doctrine: that aged men be temperate, grave, sober-minded, sound in faith, in love, in patience:

that aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers, not enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good,” etc. (Tit, 2:1-3.) Notice what a wide range sound doctrine covers—temperance, gravity, faith, love, patience, etc. To say that a sermon is a doctrinal sermon is to say that it is a teaching sermon; and why should a person try to preach any other sort?

It will be noticed, too, that Paul exhorted Titus to confine himself to “sound

doctrine.” And he exhorted Timothy: “Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim. 1:13.) To stay with the revealed will of God is to hold the pattern of sound words. My heart is fully set on doing that very thing.

To indoctrinate a person is to fill him with teaching; and is not that the great need of the hour? Not simply teaching, but sound teaching. To stir the emotions and the will without imparting knowledge is to make an ignorant zealot, or a religious fanatic. To have zeal without knowledge is to be lost. Ignorance will not save. “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” (Hos. 4:6.) Of his own nation Paul said: “For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.” (Rom. 10:2,3.) No one can subject himself to God’s righteousness while ignorant of it. False teaching leaves the mind in a state of ignorance. There are two classes of ignorant people—namely, those who have never learned anything and those who have filled their minds with false teaching. The sad part of it is, many people do not want to know, and many others fill themselves with false teaching, thinking it is the truth. Paul speaks of some who are “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (2 Tim. 3:7.) It is midnight darkness in the soul of one who has not been enlightened by the word of God, no matter what his pretensions or professions may be. “The opening of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” (Psalms 119:130.) A passing acquaintance with the Bible is not sufficient. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” (Col. 3:16.) It is the duty of every child of God to strive earnestly to arrive at a point where he can teach others; but we fall short of this God-appointed goal, even as they did in Paul’s day. “For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers,

ye have need that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food.” (Heb. 5:12.)

But seeking to fill ourselves with the knowledge of God, what rules of interpretation shall we follow? That is a point of interest to some. I could give a system of rules that have been recommended, but to the average reader most of them are rather difficult of application. The best guide I know of in Bible study is common sense and an earnest desire to know the will of God. In the absence of either of these, there is little hope that one will gain accurate information, no matter how many rules of interpretation he may adopt.

It is comforting to know that a great host of people read the Bible with a sincere desire to learn the will of God. They love to meditate on its commands, its promises, the people it mentions, the story of Jesus, and the glorious prospects it holds out before them. They feel as David when he prayed: “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” (Ps. 119:18.) And with David they can truthfully say: “O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.” (Ps. 119:97.) And such characters are the salt of the earth.

Another class read the Bible merely to be informed, just as they read other literature. They admire its beautiful language rather than its glorious truths. With them the Bible is literature. Well, it is the greatest literature ever written; but it is a pity that those who admire its literature fail so often to see anything else in it. But if a person reads it merely for its literature, he is foredoomed to see nothing else in it. That Bible does not yield up its precious truth to the one who is not searching for it.

But some read that Bible for the sake of argument. To them it is merely an arsenal from which to draw munitions of war. What they learn they use as a club with which to beat the other fellow over the head, or as a keen blade with which to skin

the opponent. They, savagelike, delight in seeing the other fellow squirm and writhe as they cudgel and scalp him. They delight in making wounds, but they heal none. Jeremiah’s question has never occurred to them: “Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?” Does a person like that know the Bible? He does not so much as know what is it for. The Bible does not yield up its truth to one who will abuse it.

It has been said that any man can find his doctrine in the Bible. That is another way of saying that we can find in the Bible what we want to find, and there is more truth in that statement than we are accustomed to think. In that respect there is no other book like it. In what spirit do you approach the Bible? That determines what you will find in it. “And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, Son of man these men have taken their idols into their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at all by them? Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Every man of the house of Israel that taketh his idols into his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the

prophet; I Jehovah will answer him therein according to the multitude of his idols.” (Ezek. 14:2-4). God answers people according to the desire of their hearts. Read carefully the case of Balaam. (See Num. 22-24.) When God saw that Balaam’s heart was fully set on going to curse Israel for reward, he said: “If the men are come to call thee, rise up, and go with them.” “And God’s anger was kindled because he went.” Jesus spoke in parables on certain occasions, because the Pharisees were so base in heart that they would have abused him and the truth had he spoken the truth in plain language. And Paul says concerning some who received not the love of the truth that they might be saved: “And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (2 Thess. 2:11,12.) The Bible is so skillfully arranged to that end that any man can go the way he wants to go, and flatter himself that he has an excuse for going. But if a man sincerely loves the truth, he will find it; but God’s truth is too precious to be intrusted to those who will abuse and misuse it.

RLW

Article taken from **Doctrinal Discourses, Whiteside, pg. 41**

CHURCH NEWS & EVENTS

Announcements

Birthdays this month:

Hallie Phillips	6
Lemuel Miller	8
Doris Miller	15
Michelle Whitaker	22

Anniversaries this month:

Shawn & Tracy Daniels	12
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Church Family News

Sarah Adams is in ICU at Decatur Memorial Hospital. Please remember her in your prayers.

Jan Hill says that she is doing fine and sends her best to us. She says she misses us very much!

Women’s Online Bible Class

The Women’s Online Bible Study was designed to give women, that perhaps cannot come to a traditional class, a chance to study the Bible with others. If you are interested in signing up or know others in the community or abroad that may be interested, please pass the word of this work.