

CURRENT EXAMPLES OF LIBERALISM

To be sure, this will be an article that rattles the cage. The very notion that liberals exist is considered anathema and unloving to many of our “kinder-gentler” Christian compromisers. (Note: the term, “liberal,” is not intended as it is sometimes used — a guilt-by-association, mud-slinging label. We believe that they can and should be specifically identified, cf. 1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Timothy 4:14; 3 John 9, et al.) To label someone “liberal,” however, is just more than some brethren can stomach. Further, the idea that they might be the side order with some main dish, either by being identified as such by their words and deeds (cf. Colossians 3:17) and/or by their support of marked liberals (2 John 9-11), is more than they can swallow. At the outset let me, without apology, clarify the intent of this article and issue. We do not write these articles to belittle anyone’s zeal for God but in a sincere search for the truth, noting that unrighteous zeal is condemned (Romans 10:1-3). Our intent is not to berate anyone’s search for a right relationship with God, however, many will cry out “Lord, Lord” and will be rejected because they do not obey Christ (Matthew 7:21-23). Instead, it is the intent of this article to show [1] that liberals exist, [2] they can be identified (and if anyone would like to challenge this writer concerning any of these assertions, he invites them to the fray), and [3] to identify them in such a way that there is no confusion as to who they are and why they are liberal. Again, apology for the truth is cowardice; this writer is not a coward. With this understanding, we will look at several current examples of liberalism in order to comply with God’s revealed word in exposing and marking error (Romans 16:17-18).

Liberalism has encroached upon the Lord’s church with a silent fury. From the new hermeneutic (a subjective, personal and errant method of interpreting the Bible) to funding mission work via car washes (and where is the authority for that? Cf. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2), we have drifted to the point that many a building with “Church of Christ” on the marquee is no longer the gathering place for people that belong to the Lord. Some of the deviations would seem as obvious as they are odious but evidently “felt needs” trump submissive obedience in our “me-first” society.

The popular digression into entertainment in lieu of worship in spirit and truth is another evidence of the liberal mindset. It is more important to cater to create an atmosphere of acceptance than it is to please the God they are supposedly worshiping. Is it not as ironic as it is sad that the words of our Lord have not made a dent? “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:21-23). Many are calling out “Lord Lord,” but do so in vain. Worshiping by the authority of God’s Word is essential criteria for divine acceptance. The faddish “contemporary” worship assemblies of liberal churches, with their praise teams and dramatic presentations (Ephesians 5:19; 2 Timothy 4:2), where women unabashedly usurp men’s leadership roles (1 Corinthians 14:34), and where memberships consist of unbaptized, lost souls (1 Peter 3:21) finds no authority in God’s Word either by direct statement, approved example or divine implication.

Perhaps the most serious mistake liberals make resides in the realm of redemption. The current clamor for ecumenical union, the acceptance of denominations under the rubric of “unity,” is nothing more than the compromise of Christian purity (cf. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18). Divine walls are demolished under the guise of an ungodly “grace” and “fellowship” is encouraged where God drew strong lines of demarcation (Ephesians 5:11). Pity the soul who will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ having called Satan his or her sibling.

When liberalism runs rampant, the Lord’s church loses its identity. A current example of that mutative process is the Oak Hills Church; formerly a church of Christ and currently a denomination (evidently, the name of Christ was too exclusive? Cf. Romans 16:16). Max Lucado compromised salvation by offering the “Sinner’s Prayer” in place of the Gospel’s invitation on a Lubbock radio station. Oak Hills Church leadership must be in agreement because an online

.pdf entitled, *Baptism: The Demonstration of Devotion*, invites you to be baptized but “craw-fishes” stating, “If you choose not to be immersed at this time, we still welcome you as a member. We ask only that you respect our teaching position and not be divisive” (emp. JDS). Apparently, if you don’t want to follow the Bible’s plan of salvation (cf. Acts 2:38, 47), becoming a member at Oak Hills does not pose a problem for her leaders - God forbid they should be “set for the defence of the gospel” (Philippians 1:17) and “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3); a classic case of compromise and conciliation for crowds and cash. Their marketing of “Worship Ministry” music (nonprofit?) and acceptance of instruments in worship further distances them from divine approval. The pity is that any number of congregations in the Permian Basin, the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, and San Antonio, to name a few, are of kindred spirits with this digression; and that is just Texas!

It becomes painfully obvious that what can be identified as modern “liberalism” is nothing more than old-fashioned rebellion, and the current examples of its sustained presence in dying churches are evident in every departure from the Scripture involving unauthorized license and artificial liberty. Because God does not articulate in a “thou shalt” or “thou shalt not” does not mean that He has remained silent on the issue or left humanity to its own devices, and the sad conclusion to the book of Judges stands in condemnation of innovators throughout all ages: “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25). In summation, “whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Colossians 3:17). If one does not have divine authority for what one does, he or she sins; if license is involved, it is a current example of liberalism.

Jeff Sweeten from *Seek Ye First...*

ILL

Sunday: Robin Brown (PM); Monica, Brook and Taylor Nemechek; Tom Tucker.

Wednesday: Steve Brown; Jessica Carter; and Millie Robertson.

Marion Stone was admitted to Olathe Medical Center on Wednesday, January 23 and is in Room 413. Cleo Stone will be having an outpatient test to determine the need for further treatments.

Those battling cancer: Jamal Abyad, David Cole, Ledgia Campbell, Betty James and Cleo Stone. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Millie Robertson, Allen Scott, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

HOME BOUND

Bob Adams resides at Room D-4 of the Johnson County Nursing Center in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

OUT OF TOWN

Robin Brown was away on business Sunday morning last week. Trent Thrasher is in Fulton, MO this weekend.

POT LUCK DINNER

Our monthly Pot Luck Dinner will be held next Sunday, February 3, following our AM worship. Plan to come, bring a dish and enjoy the good food and company!

MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING

Our monthly Men's Business Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 10, following our AM worship. All men of the congregation are encouraged to attend.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 42; Sunday PM, 32; Wednesday PM, 32.

WORDS OF WISDOM: CHRISTIANS AND TAXES

"I contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle." **Winston Churchill**

Those To Serve

January 27, 2008

BUILDING AND COMMUNION.....Cole

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS.....Trent Thrasher
SONG LEADER..... Joel Nelson
OPENING PRAYERSteve Brown
PRESIDE.....Jared Nelson
ASSIST.....Jeff Nemechek
ASSIST.....John James
CLOSING PRAYER..... John Cody Carter

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYER George Thomas
CLOSING PRAYER..... John Dodson
LORD'S SUPPER.....Jared Nelson

WEDNESDAY 30th

SONG LEADER..... 5th Weds. Singing
INVITATION John Cody Carter

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

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