

THINGS OBSERVED AS A CHRISTIAN OVER 62 YEARS

Since I was a teenager I have studied the withdrawing of fellowship. Why did I start doing this? Because what I heard from the pulpit about it was just the reading of passages pertaining to it. I was taught not to have anything to do with people that were “mean,” not even do as some people do that are in the church; but I never really heard the subject preached on from the pulpit. As I said, the passages were just read.

Lots of people dwell on the positive, loving attitude toward the wayward Christian, and I certainly agree to a certain point (1 Cor. 13), but let me ask a question. Since the church is to judge those within (1 Cor. 5:12), how much more positive and loving can one be than to do toward the wayward, whose souls will be lost because they won't abide by the Word, what God says to bring them to repentance?

I have been called a “negative” person because of my conviction on this subject. There are many negative commands in the Bible. Why do there have to be negative commands? Because there are negative Christians! Why do faithful Christians have to be negative? Because they are the ones Christ left on earth to reprove, rebuke, and exhort those Christians that act in a negative manner (2 Tim. 4:2).

When one obeys the gospel, that one makes a covenant with God according to the terms found in the law of Christ. When we deny ourselves (Matt. 16:24), our attitude will be “whatever the Word teaches, I'll do.” Christians are taught to observe all things Christ commands (Matt. 28:20).

When a Christian will no longer listen to the teaching of the Truth, or ceases to practice the Truth on any given Bible subject, that one becomes a negative Christian. Therefore, this calls for negative teaching. When one will not study the Word to know the truth, that one has forsaken God, leaving Him out of his life. Apart from God, there can be no fellowship with Him (1 John 1:6-7). Such people are walking disorderly and God has told us to withdraw from everyone who walks so (2 Thess. 3:6).

There are those that are “overtaken in a fault” to be restored (Gal. 6:1). Then there are those who sin willfully by

doing what they want to do. Those who sin willfully often do not want to study God's Word to correct their error. They become covenant breakers and out of fellowship with God. When one is out of fellowship with God, then faithful Christians are fellowshiping “unfruitful works of darkness” when they try to extend fellowship to such a one (Eph. 5:11). Such fellowship does not have God's approval.

It is the duty of elders, preachers, and members in a congregation to be watchful enough of other members lives and knowledgeable enough of the Word to know when one drops from fellowship with God (Gen. 4:9; 1 Cor. 5:12). It is a sin to fellowship someone not in fellowship with God (1 Cor. 5:6-8).

Some members of the church do not understand the meaning of fellowship and the withdrawing of it. When one is converted in South Dakota, Tanzania, or Tennessee, that one is in fellowship with every faithful Christian in the world (1 John 1:3). When one willingly stops following God, the covenant is broken, and a covenant breaker can not go to heaven (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Rom. 1:28-32).

The purpose of withdrawing is: 1). Making one ashamed (2 Thess. 3:4), 2). For punishment (2 Cor. 2:6), 3). Removing the bad influence (1 Cor. 5:7), and 4). To save the soul of the offender (1 Cor. 5:5). It is not “kicking one out of the church.” That one has already cut himself off from Christ. Some think that because of this the church cannot withdraw. The Bible tells the church, and as individuals, to do the withdrawing. Even after this, the individual is to be taught and encouraged if they will listen (2 Thess. 3:15). Withdrawing is a tool given by God for the restoring of those who depart from God.

I am thoroughly convinced that the main trouble with the Lord's church today is because some elders, preachers, and church members were not strong enough in the faith to carry out the “forgotten commandment.” I am also convinced that there are members in every congregation that do know the truth about withdrawing, but have difficulty in acting on it as the Bible teaches.

For the above reasons we have false teaching on a great many things. Therefore, until the members back faithful preaching and teaching, and the withdrawing from those in

error, the church cannot be without spot or blemish (Eph. 5:27).

Some people will call the above negative teaching, but again, we have got to be just as negative with our teaching as the Word directs toward them that are covenant breakers. Our Lord is.

Many members of the church want to go to Matthew 18:15-17 to settle nearly every sin that comes up in the church. But this passage is for one having a personal offence against another, it is to be settled between these two, two or three more, or the church. Then the unrepentant sinner is to be as a heathen (withdrawn from). It is very clear that this is a personal offence of one against another.

When one blatantly brings reproach upon the Lord's church by the life lived (1 Cor. 5), there is no doubt but that there is a need for reproof, rebuking, and exhorting. That one is to be turned over to Satan before the whole lump is leavened (2 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20).

When one teaches falsely from the pulpit, classroom, or anywhere, the false teaching should be corrected then and there. Paul did not give place to such for even an hour (Gal. 2:1-5). After one or two admonitions, the false teacher is to be rejected, withdrawn from (Titus 3:10).

If the above teachings had been followed down through the years gone by, by all, the church would be much stronger today. But what is it going to take to get the job done? Preachers with enough faith to teach it, elders with enough faith to enforce it, and members with enough faith to back the elders and the preachers and teachers. Success will not come overnight. And it is going to take courage, courage and more courage.

Shouldn't we grow our faith and muster the courage to declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27) in the pulpit, classroom, and one on one? May the Lord help us to abide in His Truth and reject all that is not in harmony with His Will?

Joe C. Turberville *via Eastside Edifier*

BIRTHDAYS

David Parish, 03-12; Derek Wilson, 03-16

ILL

Sunday: Chris Edwards (AM), Taylor Nemechek (PM).

Wednesday: Steve, Lauren and Lindsey Brown, Gary Cole, Chris Edwards, Jeremy Keifer, and Allen and Clara Scott.

Those battling cancer: Jamal Abyad, Diane Cannon, David Cole, and Ledgia Campbell. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Meredith Greer, 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

Gary Cole is in Liberal, Kansas this weekend to attend the funeral of his cousin on Monday at 10 AM. Robin Brown was working out of town last week. John and Barbara James are vacationing in Yuma, Arizona.

MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING

Our monthly Men's Business Meeting will be held this Sunday, March 11, following our AM worship. All men of the congregation are encouraged to attend this meeting.

THANKS

Our gratitude is extended to the Church of Christ at Bible Grove, MO for the song books donated to the church and delivered to us by brother Jim O'Connor.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 57; Sunday PM, 35; Wednesday PM, 26.

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." **Proverbs 3:5**

Those To Serve

March 11, 2007

BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Parish

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS..... Joel Nelson

SONG LEADER..... George Thomas

OPENING PRAYER Gary Cole

PRESIDE..... John Cody Carter

ASSIST.....John James

ASSIST.....Allen Scott

CLOSING PRAYER..... John Dodson

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYERJeremy Keifer

CLOSING PRAYER.....Jared Nelson

LORD'S SUPPER..... John Cody Carter

WEDNESDAY 14th

SONG LEADER..... John Cody Carter

INVITATIONTed Thrasher

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

Phone: (913) 764-2325

E-mail: olathecoc@sbcglobal.net

CHURCH OF CHRIST

515 WEST PARK

P.O. BOX 482

OLATHE, KANSAS 66051

www.kc-cofc.org/olathe.htm

www.oabs.org/olathe.asp