

that someday! God says through Jude, “that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). And, “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers” (Titus 1:9). As Paul said: “But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel” (Phil. 1:17). Of course, to do these things one must have the knowledge. Let us all strive to be as was Ezra, “For Ezra had **prepared** his heart to **seek** the law of the LORD, and to **do it**, and to **teach** in Israel statutes and judgments” (Ezra 7:10). What a great verse and example for us all.

Christianity is a religion of knowledge. One study I really wanted to do there was from Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Hebrews 8:6-13, showing that one must have a certain amount of knowledge in order to come into a covenant relationship with God. Surely Hosea 4:6 applies in part to that congregation and many others: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:” As Israel of old, so many today, “have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge” (Rom. 10:2). There is so much in the Bible concerning knowledge, but many are lusting to be like the denominations with just a **feel good religion**. Emotionalism, what we feel is more important to us than God’s Word. Remember Cain?

Love the brotherhood – love one another. Certainly we recognize that love is the very foundation of Christianity (Matt. 22:37-40; please read all of these verses). To love God is to obey Him (John 14:15,23, etc.). There are many verses and accounts showing that we are to rebuke those in sin (see beginning of this series and many other verses). Love of brethren demands rebuke when necessary and brethren with true love will do so. David had no greater friend on earth than Nathan who rebuked him severely (2 Sam. 12:1-13). Godly people know this, but how many people actually practice true love? Few, and herein is another great problem in the church. Preachers are charged: “Preach the word; be instant **in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort** with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2, study that carefully). Why? Because of love for souls (Eph. 4:15). Preachers and teachers must have enough love to do this preaching – the whole council of God or be guilty of the blood of those they fail to warn (Acts 20:26-28 cp. 1 Thess. 5:14; Titus 1:13; Rev. 3:19, etc.).

Let us all examine our love for God and our faith in Him, and our love one for another (cp. 2 Cor. 13:5). (continued) ♥



“Hold fast the form of sound words”

SW

(2 Tim. 1:13 cp. Tit. 1:9; Jude 3)

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Leadership Problems (continued)

(Lack Of Love And Faith)

by Perry Sexton

Surely any true Christian can see this congregation is not following God’s pattern for the church (see last month’s article). God gave us a plan for an eldership, but this congregation, at least some did, came up with their own system called “The Leadership,” wherein they have become “lords” which is also condemned by God (1 Peter 5:1-4). One should see already how unqualified they are to be elders over God’s church! But, do they even want to be God’s church? My conclusion is “no” by the many things I saw there, or at least they do not want to follow God’s pattern.

Back to that Wednesday night where Randy (L), in my opinion, tried to cause trouble (is that a mark of an elder or even a Christian?) and clearly showed his ignorance; I was teaching on Nadab and Abihu from Leviticus 10:1,2 and made the point about not using mechanical instruments of music [MIM] in worship to God. It seemed obvious to me that this subject had not been discussed for a long time! And may I insert here that God will bring every secret thing into the Judgment (Eccl. 12:14). It seems very obvious to me (God knows) who the real “Leaders” are at this congregation. Cathy, the wife of John (L), at least the second wife of John – now let us pause here and look at one qualification of an elder: God says “the husband of one wife” (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6).

But who cares what God says? It is very obvious to me these do not, and the congregation has in one way or the other gone along with it, but are they guiltless before God? Who in their right mind can think so? Does nothing matter? Can we do just whatever we think is

right (cp. Judges 17:6, do we have no King?). Ah, but I forgot, they are not elders, they are “The Leadership.” Is that from God or man? Now get the picture: God wants elders (men who meet certain qualifications), evidently not two men there qualify, so they get around God’s Word by creating “The Leadership” with unqualified men in **many** ways which have even become “lords over *God’s* heritage” (1 Peter 5:3) and love the praise thereof (cp. John 12:43).

Cathy spoke up and said she understood about necessary inference, etc. **But** then she went on and said we do not have authority for song books, church buildings, and POWER POINT (she emphasized power point (PP) and no doubt it was said for my benefit since I used PP there), etc. Well, by all of this, no I do not think Cathy understands “necessary inference” or at least she will not accept the conclusion of that true principle. How is it one can be in the so called church (just wearing the name church of Christ does not make it a church of Christ!) for many, many years and not truly understand these things?

Herein is seen a great problem! And a terrible attitude! Brethren, if it is true as Cathy said, that we do not have authority for those things and other such things, we had better stop using those things as it is a very serious matter to do that which is unauthorized by God. Nothing is clearer in the Bible than the fact that we must have authority for everything we do in religion (Col. 3:17; John 4:24, etc. and the many great lessons in both Old and New Testaments). So, what does this attitude show? It shows an attitude of, “We are going to do this thing (whatever it is) regardless of what God says.” Have you seen this attitude in the Bible anywhere? Yes, from Cain on! And it is certainly prevalent in our day, even in the church. The underlying problem is a pure ole lack of love for God, and lack of faith in God.

God authorizes by direct statement, example, and implication. We must seek God’s truth with all honesty (John 8:31,32; Luke 8:15). Every member of the church needs to understand these things very well. How can we serve God faithfully without understanding them? I firmly believe the reason we have lost and are losing so many of our people, especially of the younger class, is because our people – our children were not grounded in these biblical principles. They can see no difference between us and the churches of men. In that case, have we not become a church of man ourselves? Where does **all** of our doctrine come from: Heaven, or of men?

Does it matter??? **Note two examples:** (1.) We are to sing praises to God without the use of MIM – that is clear Bible. **But does**

it matter why we do not use MIM just as long as we do not use MIM in worship? Let us say that we do not use MIM in worship to God because we just assume it is a tradition of the church. Is that good enough? No, not at all. After class I had at least three people ask about why we do not use MIM in worship. One had been going there on and off for 20 years. That shows the teaching they have had on this subject (or lack thereof) and other like subjects.

(2.) The alien sinner must be baptized in order to be saved. **Does it matter the reason one is baptized?** One is baptized because Jesus was, is that good enough? Is that what God wants? No. Can one be saved in such? No! Let us say one is baptized thinking it is just a tradition of the church, or to obey God. Are these reasons good enough and I might ask also, are they from God? No to both questions! What does God say: see Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21. Now, for what reason must a person be baptized? It is simple isn’t it, **IF** we want to obey God. If a person is baptized for any other reason than what God gives, is that person obeying God? No!

Is one truly obeying God when he does what God says, but not for the reason God says? No. One example: a father tells his son to paint the fence, but the son does not. Then the mother bribes the son with money to paint the fence and he does. Did he obey the father? No. The reason we do and do not things makes all the difference. By the way, it is very likely many of the people in this congregation have never obeyed the gospel – just getting wet is not obeying the gospel. The knowledge was just not there (see below about knowledge). It is my sincere hope and prayer that things will greatly change there and it be a true church of Christ.

To the audience I asked the question: “How many of you have heard of the law of exclusion or the law of silence, which is really the same thing?” Out of about 20 to 25 adults present only one said, “I think I have heard of that.” This is just unbelievable to me!!! Is it any wonder the church is in the mess it is today???

Oh for godly elders who will feed the flock (Acts 20:28) as they that must give account (Heb. 13:17), and make no mistake “The Leadership” will give account! I also showed the answer to a couple of denominational arguments against baptism and they had never heard of those. What a very sad state for those who call themselves the church of Christ. They have not been taught properly (Acts 20:26,27).

The church is to be militant, but it is clear they want no part of that! It is clear that their former preachers and teachers have just tip toed through the tulips tickling ears, but they will answer to God for