

3:12). Many other examples could be cited, but please remember, **it was God's people rejecting the men of God, and thus rejecting God's word and God!** An age old problem not only in Old Testament times but also in New Testament times, and we are told by God it would continue to be so. It is definitely a problem in this day! Only the blind cannot see it (John 12:40; 2 Cor. 4:4).

Jesus forewarned us: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matt. 5:12, please read from verse 5 and understand: the peacemakers are those who faithfully proclaim all of God's Word, not just what the people like.). Jesus, Himself, is the ultimate example of those who caused trouble among those who do not love the truth (cp. 2 Thess. 2:10-12; see Matt. 23).

What Is Your View Of Christ?

Please note this introduction to an audio recording: "Is your view of Jesus accurate, or do you possess a diluted view of who Jesus is? By today's 'politically correct' standard, Jesus was 'mean-spirited' and 'harsh.' The New Testament portrays Jesus as very direct and penetrating in His encounters with people. He also downplayed emotion in religion. He was calm and dispassionate. ..."
[What Jesus Was Really Like – Audio; Apologetics Press]

For our own souls sake let us be honest with ourselves: Do we truly serve God, or self? Just because one is a "member" of the church of Christ does not mean he is serving Christ faithfully! There are so many things that can hinder us from serving God faithfully: lack of faith and love; pride of life; selfishness, etc. Let us truly examine ourselves before it is eternally too late (2 Cor. 13:5). Are we willing to speak the truth in love even if it (truth) drives people away? Do we have that kind of love for God and the lost? Brethren, no one is going to be saved by a watered down gospel. Do we fear God more than man (cp. Matt. 10:28)? Hear Paul, "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). Many in the church are not true servants of God: many are seeking to fulfill their own egos – serving self. Do we have the love and faith (1 Tim. 6:12ff; 2 Tim. 4:1ff)? Much more could be said, but you know, God has already said it if we will hear Him!

--The End, with love and prayers. ♥



"Hold fast the form of sound words"

SW

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

SW

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Leadership Problems/ Youth Ministers (cont.)

(Error / Mean Spirited or Truth / Love)

by Perry Sexton

Art (L) is a likeable person and I think he, like most people, wants to be liked and is careful to try to be liked in the Bible class he teaches. But brethren, that is not what teaching and preaching is about: it is about teaching and preaching the Word of truth faithfully and completely (2 Tim. 4:2; Acts 20:26,27). If one has true love for souls he will do this (Eph. 4:15). Preaching / teaching is to be an exegesis of the Scriptures, a bringing out what the Bible teaches. What I observed in Art's class mostly was eisegeses, which is reading into the text that which is not there: one's own ideas. A good example is when Art dealt with Matthew 7:13,14. Art (L) explained it saying it is like a cone narrow on one end and becomes wide on the other – speaking of the blessings of the Christian life. It may sound good and must have to most of the ones there, but that is not the teaching of the passage in the least!!! Art (L) said nothing of the warning of the broad way and the restrictiveness of the narrow way. In my opinion their agenda is seen here and it is definitely not to preach the whole council of God. They seem to want all things positive and that embellished with falsehoods, nothing negative!

Their agenda is clearly to please as many as they can for numbers sake, in my opinion, and still have some kind of a conscience about them – say nothing to offend anyone except maybe in dire cases. How else would one explain the many very serious errors that have existed there for years? Errors such as salvation by grace only; the damnable doctrine of premillennialism; the use of mechanical instruments of music [MIM] in worship is not a salvation issue; direct

operation of the Holy Spirit; modern day miracles; members living in adultery, etc. A dearth of knowledge exists there that I have never seen before in a group wearing the name church of Christ.

The dearth of good sound material: The building is nice and clean which is good, but it is also clean as far as there being any good sound religious material for members and visitors to pick up and read. I have never seen a place like it! A congregation whose agenda is to impart knowledge normally has a good tract rack with good sound material for all to benefit from; covering a wide range of subjects, especially on the church and salvation. Such is very good. But I do not believe they want the whole truth there! They want to hear of Heaven, but not the truth of what is required by God in order to go there. Speak of salvation, but not the oneness and distinctiveness of the church. They have the NIV as their pew Bible, again showing their disdain for truth. See April 2014 issue of WOL. What a sad state to be in!

It was clear to me that the membership and leadership did not understand the foundational principles of Christianity, nor did the leadership want such taught there – ignorance is bliss. It opens the doors to do what you want to do, believe what you want to believe: “Come as you are, you do not have to change a thing,” attitude. On a Wednesday night I was teaching on baptism and one of their members of about 20 years spoke against baptism being essential for salvation. She argued for salvation by grace only, as others had done in a prior class. I was dealing with her arguments, but Randy (L) spoke up and said to get on with the class that the conversation was all one sided. Just another example of how they don’t want to offend anyone and a very good example of how truth is suppressed there! I know some things need to be dealt with privately, but things like this need to be dealt with publicly as well. Of course I offered to study further with her and others who held to that damnable belief, but I am sure you guessed it – they would not study further.

Very serious problems abound there and I believe the Lord has removed their candlestick a long time ago (cp. Rev. 2:5ff). It would be wonderful if they would truly repent – “Oh if there were such an heart in them ...” (Deut. 5:29), but based on the Bible and personal experience it is very unlikely. They are going the way of others around them of which some have even changed their names to something other than church of Christ, which should be done when a group is no longer the church of Christ in truth. I have prayed for them and will continue to do so.

Youth Ministers

This was my first time working with a church with a youth minister. I do not know what the leadership’s official list of duties were for him, but mostly what I saw and read from him was about entertainment. This is just another example of them not following God’s way, but following the ways of man (denominations).

Paul said to the young preacher Timothy (note, not youth minister), “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. ¹³Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:12). I must say, he was an example, but not for much good! Even when he preached he was just about the most casually dressed person there. Brethren, we all need to seriously consider our dress when we come to worship Almighty God. God deserves, and demands our best (see articles in other issues on this subject). This is just another subject that if one really wants the truth on, he can find it in the Bible.

The youth minister’s wife was even worse in example. Not only did she dress in very casual clothes for worship services, often times she dressed indecently – in such a manner in which a Christian should not be seen by anyone except her husband in private. This is another subject that brethren are slack in throughout most of the brotherhood, but God is not slack in giving us proper instructions if we truly want to serve Him. “Oh if there were such an heart in them ...” (Deut. 5:29). What about us? Is there such a heart in US??? What is our attitude? “Oh To Be Like Thee,” or “Oh To Be Like The World”? The answer is obvious to the honest biblically grounded person. God does have a dress code!

Where Is The Problem?

Invariably the problem is with people like me (Perry)! It always has been so in the mind of such people. Consider: “And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, *Art thou he that troubleth Israel*” (1 Kings 18:17).” Also, “And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found *thee*: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD” (1 Kings 21:20). “... Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. ...” (Jer. 26:8,9 cp. 2 Tim. 4:1-5;