

# THE BOTTOM LINE

At a typical annual shareholders' meeting, the chairman of the board gives a lengthy welcome to the attendees, followed by a flattering introduction of himself and the board. After covering numerous points of order, he then launches into a protracted speech about the corporation's vision for the future. Through all of this, the stockholders in attendance anxiously await more useful information: whether the customer base is being expanded, how much money the corporation spent and will spend, and how much money the corporation made and will make. They are interested in the bottom line.

It is readily acknowledged that businesses exist to make money, and need customers to do so. But trouble is always closely behind whenever principles of the world dictate how one conducts himself in religion (consider Acts 8:18-20).

Yet, so many churches are intentionally market-driven rather than spiritually led. Church leaders are interested first and foremost in the same things in which corporate stockholders are interested: whether the *customer base* is being expanded (whether attendance is increasing), how much money has been spent and will be spent, and how much money has been brought in and will be brought in. Rather than seeking to emulate the New Testament pattern that led to the Divine commendation of churches such as Thessalonica and Philadelphia (1 The. 1; Rev. 3:8-10), church leaders seek to emulate the paradigms of the financially successful, but repugnant to the Lord, Willow Creek and Saddleback Community Churches.

Christians certainly should be interested in preaching the Gospel to as many people as possible (Mark 16:15), stewardship of the Lord's resources (Mat. 25:14-30; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 4:2), and giving generously to the Lord (2 Cor. 9:13). But when popularity and financial success are viewed as the church's ultimate goal, we are not measuring success by the Lord's standard.

Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). The church, the kingdom Christ would and did establish (Dan. 7:13-14; Mat. 16:18; Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9), is not of worldly origin or nature. Nor is it intended to serve worldly interests; as the inspired apostle Paul wrote: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17).

Christ is certainly interested in a bottom line, but His bottom line is not the same as that of the worldly-minded. While standing at the Judgment Throne we might try to be like the chairman of the board at a shareholders' meeting. We might desire to bring up various things: Our appreciation to God for all He gave us on earth, a rundown of all our many accomplishments on the earth, and a protracted speech about what we would do on earth if given more time. Jesus foretold: "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" (Mat. 7:22). But the Judge on that day will not be interested in peripheral matters or unsubstantiated claims; He will wholly reject them and those who make them: "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (7:23). He will be interested only in the bottom line: "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" (7:21). The bottom line in religion, whether individually or collectively, and the bottom line in life is: Did you do what God said?

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## BELVEDERE BEACON

"Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14)

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### "I Just Want to Be Their Friend"

There is a modern day philosophy that is sweeping its poisonous venom through naive and *worldly families*. It masquerades itself as intellectualism, but it will destroy the future of untold children. This poisonous venom is espoused by some of the most ignorant in society. Perhaps you have heard it and never realized the consequences of its teaching. Have you ever heard a parent speaking of their children saying: "I just want to be their friend?" It is a catchy phrase that sounds as if it is intellectual, but it is not.

Children do not need their parents trying to be their friends! Young people need parents that will be parents. They need a father and a mother who will guide them through the maze of dangers that adolescents face on a daily basis. Children need parents who will reject their foolish ideas and guide them on the path of righteousness helping them to shun evil counsel. Solomon said: "My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother; For they *will be* a graceful ornament on your head, And chains about your neck" (Pro. 1:8-9). Solomon's instructions sounds as if parents should be parents guiding their children through the challenges of life, not seeking to be their "friend." Sometimes friends will hold back wise council because they are afraid they will harm their friendships. Not so with loving parents! They will never hold back anything that will protect and guide their children. Why? Because they love them enough to tell them when they are wrong.

The philosophies of men are extremely dangerous because they invalidate the doctrine of Christ. It is written: "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Parents can be a detriment to their children or they can be godly parents, guiding them toward the moral standard of right and wrong established by God. What type of parent are you?

Paul Vaughn  
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#### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

##### SUNDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 10.00 am.  
Morning Worship 11.00 am.  
Evening Worship 6.00 p.m.

##### WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 7.00 p.m.

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## AN ERRING BROTHER

*“Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (James 5:19-20).*

An erring brother is one who, at one time was a faithful Christian but one who has now erred from the truth. This could be an elder, a deacon, a preacher or any other member of the church. Sadly, in the day in which we live, it seems that many preachers and elders find themselves in that situation, being an erring brother, either because of there having embraced false teaching or their fellowship of a known false teacher who has not repented and turned from his error. These elders and preachers by upholding the unrepentant false teacher are those in violation of: *“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (III John 9-11).*

Note what is stated regarding the erring brother is referred to as a sinner and guilty of a multitude of sins. Having erred from the truth such an one needs to be converted back to the truth and to faithfulness. And we should do all we can to convert such a one.

The opposite of an erring brother is a faithful Christian. The faithful Christian is one who does not practice sin nor walk in sin. Note what John writes: *“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (I John 3:9).* This does not mean that it is impossible for one *“born of God,”* a faithful Christian to commit a single act of sin. To conclude such would place one in conflict with what John had previously stated in the same epistle: *“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (I John 1:7-10).*

We note that if a Christian says he never commits even a single act of sin, he is self deceived and *“the truth is not in him.”* Further, if one says he has not sinned, he makes God a liar because He says that we do sin. However, the faithful Christian does not continue to live a life of sin. This is precisely what is indicated by the Greek verb that is found in I John 3:9. If one continues to live a life of sin, it also means, as John, by inspiration, sates: *“his word is not in us.”* This is the reason why the faithful child of god walks in righteousness. It is the seed, the word of God (Luke 8:11) that controls his life. The sweet singer of Israel, the inspired David, said: *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:11).* If we *“walk in the light”* (that is such is our daily practice) and confess our sins then the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, keeps on cleansing us from all sin (I John 1:7).

*Ken Chumbley*

## NEWS AND NOTES

Keep in your prayers the following: Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett, Lavonne McClish, Linda Chumbley, and Rachel Fitzpatrick’s aunt (Eula Baker) who has cancer, Maomi Aaron’ sister who is having health problems, Myrtle Grimsley, Lanny Niver together with his daughter, and Tim Smith. Pam Gossett is staying at her daughter’s for a few weeks and will not be with us.

Sister Grimsley was not out as she was not well.

Lanny Niver is still having difficulties with walking and spent a few days in Doctors hospital. He is to have some more procedures done.

Ron Wilson’s mother has fallen. She does not have any broken bones but is bruised up.

Our sympathy is extended to Glenn Aaron and family in the passing of Glenn’s aunt, Lillian Aaron. Services were held last Monday.

Rachel Fitzpatrick is in Greenwood, SC this weekend with her mother and other family members.

Michael Farmer’s mother is scheduled to have cataract surgery May 13.

Our next pot luck will be on May 3 following our morning services. Plan to stay and eat together.

It has been requested that children not be allowed to run around in the building where they could cause injury to themselves as well as cause damage to the interior. They are free to run around outside on the grass.

## I Will

Like Paul, forget those things which are behind, and press onward;  
Like David, lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help;  
Like Abraham, trust implicitly in my God;  
Like Enoch, walk daily in fellowship with my heavenly Father,  
Like Jehoshaphat prepare my heart to seek God;  
Like Moses choose rather to suffer than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;  
Like Daniel commune with God at all times;  
Like Job be patient under all circumstances;  
Like Caleb and Joshua refuse to be discouraged because of superior numbers;  
Like Gideon advance even though my friends be few;  
Like Aaron and Hur uphold the hands of the leaders of the church with prayer and support;  
Like Andrew strive to lead my brother to Christ;  
Like Stephen manifest a forgiving spirit toward all who seek my hurt.

*Author Unknown*